

RENASCENT INDIA

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FROM RAMMOHAN ROY

to

MOHANDAS GANDHI

by

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LONDON

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD

MUSEUM STREET

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1933

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
UNWIN BROTHERS LTD., WOKING

To the Memory
of my political Guru
GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALÉ

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INTRODUCTORY

"THE Mysterious East": the old catchword has lost much of its pristine virtue—mainly perhaps because people in the West have come more generally to realize that to speak of *their* mystery is only another way of saying *our* ignorance. And the twin phrase about "the unchanging East"—what else is it largely, but Western incapacity for seeing the change?

The change from XVIIIth-Century to XXth-Century England we know; hence we think of England as "progressive": the similar transition of India from the period of the Great Mughal to that of the Mahatma we do not know; wherefore we first pronounce "the East" to be incapable of change, and then, when indeed the change has become so manifest, as almost to overwhelm us, we feel not a little aggrieved at the unreasonableness of the East's sudden somersault.

Warren Hastings—the Mutiny—the Montagu Reforms: how much more does the average man know about the recent history of India? And even where more is known, does such knowledge not only too often just follow the school histories of India with their lists of Governors-General, of battles and of what the British did? Yes, but what did the Indians themselves do in that period? How does that wonderful Renaissance look from their point of view?

I would be the last to deny, or even to belittle the external influences that during this past century and a half have so powerfully been at work in India—influences which may be summed up as caused by two factors, one missionary, the other political. Without the Christian Missionary and the foreign invader the indigenous Reform Movement, which has produced this marvellous Indian Renaissance, would obviously have been impossible. But these facts are indeed well enough known in the West. What, however, seems to me to be singularly unknown

here is an account, not of the external stimuli received during this period by Hindu Society, but of the reaction of that Society to them; not a history of the new forces assailing Hindusthan from without, but of their assimilation from within.

Such an account seems to me not only to be interesting, but alone capable of furnishing the key to our understanding of that Indian Renaissance and of its outcome to-day, which looms so large in the crowded events of our own days, and which will probably loom larger still in the retrospect of coming generations, who may see in this period above all the redressing of world balance between East and West, between White and Black.

English Histories of India, as I have said, are not lacking, nor are Indian accounts of certain incidents and certain personalities in the Renaissance of the past hundred years; but a reasoned history of that period from the Indian point of view does not yet exist. Mr. C. F. Andrews in 1912 essayed the task in his little book, *The Renaissance in India*: but the narrative is somewhat slight and obviously written specially for such readers as the Young People's Missionary Movement, which indeed published it in London. The late Lajpat Rai has written his own interpretation and history of the Nationalist Movement from within and published it (first in 1915) under the title of *Young India*: but the story he tells of course leaves out all that has happened after that date and touches but lightly on what came to pass before his own personal experience. Sir Harrington Lovett in 1920 published a *History of the Indian Nationalist Movement* (Murray's), but he would be the first to acknowledge that the point of view is very far from being that of an Indian. Mrs. Besant's *How India Wrought for Freedom* (Theosophical Publishing House, 1915) merely tells the story of the Indian National Congress from 1885 to 1914; and Sir Surendranath Banerjea's *A Nation in the Making* (Oxford University Press,

1927), though extremely valuable, is after all but an autobiography. There remains Mr. R. G. Pradhan's *India's Struggle for Swaraj*, published by Natesan of Madras in 1930; but even so, I venture to think, there is room for one other such account of that "Struggle for Swaraj," especially if such account goes a little farther back and is not limited to the political history of India alone, but, as I propose to give it, will survey India's social as well as political evolution in interplay with events in England during the century which stretches from Ram Mohan Roy's death and from the passing of the Reform Bill in England to the Satyagraha of Mahatma Gandhi and the mournful history of our own days in India. For there is so much action and reaction in India's and England's linked destinies, that a history which keeps count of one side alone must needs become a very one-sided account of either.

And perhaps I may claim in this respect certain qualifications, which are none too common in their combination: for though by parentage, birth and education a Westerner, I have spent the larger part of my life in the East, and eventually became (and still am) an Associate "Servant of India" in that Society founded by Gokhalé, of which I shall tell in the pages to follow. Add to these facts my Jewish descent and my Catholic faith, and perhaps it will be conceded that the factors for producing a balanced and impartial, yet withal sympathetic and understanding, interracial and supernational History are given, however inadequate the use may after all seem, to which I have put such rare advantages.

RENASCENT INDIA

CHAPTER I

THE SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENT

THE Renaissance of India, as of any Nation, is above and before all things a matter of the spirit: before we consider its political consequences, it is therefore essential to examine the general Reform Movement which has seized Hindu Society for more than a hundred years and which produced striking religious and social reforms long before it issued in a movement for political emancipation. The latter indeed is so closely connected with the former that it is only possible to keep them logically apart, but for a clear treatment of the subject, we cannot but deal with them successively. Yet from the outset it must be emphasized—however singular this may seem to the largely neo-pagan mentality of modern Europe—that it is impossible to understand Indian political aspirations and activities, if one divorces them from that nation's great new spiritual urge towards Truth and Justice—aye, and Love—of which the one and the other alike are but outward manifestations.

It is the Spirit of God, breathing where it listeth, which has inspired the spirits of men in this, as in all similar cases: however little or much the frail human personalities concerned may have been able to give expression to the Spirit's promptings, even if they have not perverted them altogether and managed to produce a later state of confusion, far worse confounded than the former was. Of such personalities—good, bad and indifferent—who have become prominent in this Indian Renaissance, the number is very great indeed and ever swelling: but in the last instance all really can be said to go back in their spiritual parentage to one man—Ram Mohan Roy—and to the Brahmo Samaj he founded.

RAM MOHAN ROY, 1772-1833

Ram Mohan's birth falls into the period when the English began to look upon India as something more than a mere "market" for their East India Company. It was the age of Burke and of Warren Hastings' impeachment: the two sayings of the former that "great empires and little minds go ill together," and that the British Nation must look upon its role in India as that of a "trustee," sum up the new orientation of British policy in India, which set in at this time and rendered a response of willing cooperation on the part of India's élite possible. When in 1765 the Emperor of India delegated to the East India Company governmental powers in the territories occupied by them, the Company first became more than a purely trading concern; when in 1833 the British Parliament once more renewed the Company's Charter, it forced the Company to cease henceforth altogether to be a commercial body. Ram Mohan Roy's life lies between these two dates, which circumscribe this great transition period, during which the British Nation became increasingly conscious of its moral obligations: and it is no mere coincidence that, when in 1813, the Company's Charter came up before Parliament for its usual decennial renewal, it was so amended as not only to throw India open to the trade, but also to the Missionaries of the whole realm.

R. M. Roy was in the first instance a religious reformer. Already at the age of 16 he had, under Moslem influence, written a Bengali pamphlet against Idolatry; sixteen years later he returned to the charge in a Persian booklet entitled *A Gift to Deists*. Indeed the Deism of Western XVIIIth-Century thought dominated him, and his main preoccupation was, how to rid the religion of Hinduism of both image worship and sacrificial rites. He was 21 when he took to the study of English, and 41 when he withdrew from all secular work and devoted himself entirely to his studies. A great Sanskrit scholar,

he mastered ultimately also Latin, Greek and Hebrew. In 1820 he published *The Precepts of Jesus*, in which he repudiated Our Lord's divinity, but adopted His ethical teaching. He was in constant touch with the Protestant missionaries then in Bengal, with the melancholy result, that he converted one of them, a Baptist called Adam, to Unitarianism. In 1827 he formed the British Indian Unitarian Association, but not satisfied with its purely Western outlook, he founded in the following year the Brahmo Samaj. The latter was to bear a typical Indian character, but he saw in it also the great world religion of the future, comprising the Monotheism of Islam, the Ethics of the New Testament and the philosophy of Upanishads; and he further believed that this religion of the future was also the pure religion of the past, before its subsequent varieties had degenerated and become falsified by later "accretions." It is important to state these details, for all Hindu religious reformers that came after him have but continued along these lines, as laid down by Ram Mohan Roy—whether they happened to be members of this Brahmo Samaj of his or founded new sects of their own.

If a classical Moslem education at Patna¹ had launched Ram Mohan Roy on this course of religious reform, the loss of a sister-in-law by *sati*² (i.e. by her seeking death on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband), was the impetus which impelled him to take up the cause of social reform. It was in 1818 (when as many as 839 *satis* were officially returned as having taken place during that year in Bengal Presidency), that Ram Mohan Roy "began to publish his pamphlets against the rite, action which aroused such anger that for a while his life was in danger. But," continues Mr. Edward Thompson in his monograph on the subject,³ "he thereby awakened a conscience in his own countrymen, which presently found expression in protests in native newspapers; and the number of suttees never

¹ Manilal C. Parekh, *The Brahmo Samaj*, Rajkot, 1929, p. 4.

² Ibid., p. 16.

³ *Suttee* (London, 1928), p. 70.

reached this height again." *Sati* was at last rendered illegal in 1829 by Lord William Bentinck's courageous Regulation XVII of that year, which put an end to a policy of pedantic legalism and timid vacillation, which had disgraced the Government of Bengal, since one of its Collectors, in 1789, had brought to its official notice the fact that he had forcibly prevented a *sati*.¹ Moreover, when in 1830 eight hundred Orthodox Hindus appealed to the Privy Council "on behalf of the religious rites which Lord Bentinck had stopped, contrary to the engagement of the Government not to interfere with liberty of conscience," Ram Mohan Roy, who was then in England, "obtained access to Members of Parliament and was consulted by the Privy Council. He, with all the emphasis and power of his amazing intellect and personality, begged them to reject the appeal of the pro-suttee party (which they did in 1832) and he procured a petition from progressive and humane Hindus, thanking Lord Bentinck for what he had done."²

Modern Hindu Social Reform can be said to have started with this abolition of *sati*: but great as was Ram Mohan Roy's share in this achievement, *sati* by no means monopolized his zeal as a social reformer. It was Ram Mohan Roy, who first demanded for Hindu widows the right to remarry; he it was who inveighed against polygamy and concubinage. Caste, as it was practised, he denounced as full of hideous abuses; indeed, all the orthodox taboos of Hinduism seemed to him mere superstition; he was also the first high-caste Hindu who spurned the prohibition of crossing the "black water" of the ocean and who—as we have already seen—went to Europe (in 1830). He visited France and England, where, sad to relate, he died. Above all, he was a believer in education, and Western education at that. That the Occidental school of education for India triumphed³ over the Orientalists; that in 1828 English became, in place of Persian, the official language of India; that

¹ *Suttee* (London, 1928), p. 60

² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

³ Parekh, loc. cit., p. 18.

the great Scottish Presbyterians, John Wilson and Alexander Duff, came to India in 1829-1830 and there were able to lay the foundation to the system of education¹ which India has continued to this day: all this, in a pre-eminent degree, is due to the initiative or at least zealous support of Ram Mohan Roy.

Ram Mohan Roy, moreover, was an Anglicist, not only culturally, but politically too. Dr. Macnicol² quotes the following from the evidence which Ram Mohan Roy gave in 1831 before a Committee of the House of Commons: "I have no hesitation in saying, with reference to the general feeling of the more intelligent part of the native community, that the only course of policy which can ensure their attachment to any form of Government, would be that of making them eligible to gradual promotion, according to their respective abilities and merits, to situations of trust and responsibility in the State." This significant passage denotes by no means a sordid hankering after the loaves and fishes of office: it states a fact, patent to this wise observer then, as it is to us to-day, a hundred years later. But it implies far more: for Democracy and Progress had for Ram Mohan Roy, as for so many of his time, an almost mystic import. When the Spanish people got a constitution, he gave a public dinner in Calcutta to celebrate the event³; and the rack rents of Ireland roused him to as much indignation as those of his native Bengal. Perhaps he preferred the political institutions of France to those of England: at all events he considered British rule in India as due to a dispensation of Providence. Prof. Glasenapp⁴ calls him "the first Bengali prose writer of importance," as well as "the first Bengali politician and journalist." In fact, he may be said to have founded the great Indian Press which to-day covers the land; and if in 1836 freedom of the Press was established in India—first in all Asia!—it was again because

¹ Manilal C. Parekh, *The Brahmo Samaj*, p. 20.

² Nicol Macnicol, *The Making of Modern India*, Oxford, 1924, p. 186.

³ Parekh, *The Brahmo Samaj*, p. 15.

⁴ *Religiose Reformbewegungen im heutigen Indien*, Leipzig, 1928, p. 3.

of the foundation that Ram Mohan Roy had laid for it. Truly, "he was the herald of a new age," as Dr. Macnicol calls him¹: and the fire he kindled in India has burnt there ever since.

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ

Turning now to the Brahmo Samaj and its history, subsequent to its founder's death, we shall have to remember that it was essentially a society, the members of which wished to "modernize" themselves, without having to become Christians: and that "modernizing" at the time inevitably meant "anglicizing." With an awakened national consciousness and sensitiveness, such as we know it to-day, "to anglicize" has become a term of reproach; it seems to indicate a sad underrating of Indian Culture and Indian History; it is therefore to-day largely looked upon as the mark of one who has deserted the national cause and sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. So strong is this feeling to-day, that it comes quite as a surprise, when one discovers that a hundred years ago, not only was it not considered unpatriotic to anglicize oneself, but, on the contrary, that it was the very mark of patriotism to want to modernize Hindu Society and Indian Polity, and that for this urgent work of renewal and reconstruction an imitation of England was the obvious, in fact, the only possible, method. That Christian Missions denationalize their converts—a charge now so currently, and often so justly, made—would have had no meaning in Early Victorian days. The self-complacency of a Lord Macaulay or a Miss Martineau about the cultural superiority of Manchester over Benares was universally shared—by the Indian people as much as by the English. That a shelf of modern English books was worth whole libraries full of Oriental literature seemed self-evident at the time: did not in still quite

¹ Macnicol, loc. cit., p. 172.

recent days a Pandita Ramabai¹ refuse to let her daughter learn Sanskrit?

There can therefore be nothing derogatory to the great merit of the Brahmo Samaj, as pioneers of India's renaissance, in the matter-of-fact statement that from its very start the felt need for modernization was its real *raison d'être*; nor that this tendency has always remained its chief characteristic. At the same time it is only natural that this anglicizing bent should also have called forth from time to time in the body of the Samaj itself a reaction on the part of those who would not go so far or so fast, as others, whose radicalism seemed at times to be "throwing away the baby with the bathwater." On the whole, however, such opposition has never developed very strongly within the Brahmo Samaj, but rather has hived off and started rival organizations, whose inspiration, for all their opposition, has remained in the last resort Ram Mohan Roy.

The Brahmo Samaj itself, after the death of its founder, has suffered not a little from these at times violent actions and reactions in its body and has developed an unfortunate tendency to split into ever more and more sections and cliques. The immediate successor of *Rajarshi* ("King of Sages") Ram Mohan Roy in the leadership of the Samaj was the *Maharshi* ("Great Sage") Devendra Nath Tagore (1818-1905), a personality of a more conservative and nationalist type. He however was soon rivalled by *Brahmarshi* ("Divine Sage") Keshav Chandra Sen (1838-1884), a Progressive and Universalist, if ever there was one. Both tried to mould the Brahmo Samaj according to their own points of view, with the very natural result, that the sect split in two. Keshav instigated the Native Marriage Act of 1872, and thus opened the way to both inter-caste and civil marriage; being fired with missionary zeal, he was responsible for spreading the Brahmo

¹ Ramabai Saraswati, 1858-1922; a well-known Protestant convert from Hinduism, and herself a remarkably fine Sanskrit scholar. Cf. Macnicol, loc. cit., p. 205.

Samaj in Madras and in Bombay, where it became a distinct body, the Prarthana Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj as such was, and is, however, practically limited to Bengal: and even there it attains almost exclusively what constitutes the "polite society" of Calcutta. At the Census of 1921 only 6,388 persons of the 320 million inhabitants of the Indian Continent returned themselves as Brahmos.

Is this then all that is left of Ram Mohan Roy's creation? Mr. Parekh¹—who before his conversion to Christianity was a Brahmo missionary—goes so far in his mordant summing-up of the Brahmo Samaj, as to say: "Starting as an imitation of Unitarian Christianity, it is to-day still merely a poor reflection of European Rationalism. To this intellectual bias it has added another which may well be called pharisaic and communal. It has become a kind of backwater of religious and communal life, separated by its own sense of self-satisfied superiority from the main currents of national life, which flows past it with a power and rapidity, which it can neither appreciate nor even understand. . . ."

That this severe, not to say bitter, judgment contains elements of truth, it would be impossible to deny: but to let it stand by itself would not only be unfair, it would be untrue. Taking first the taunt of Communalism, it must never be forgotten that in a country like India, not atomized by Western individualism, there is simply no room for unattached individuals. Membership in a caste of their own for those who refuse to comply with the traditional rules and taboos of the caste, into which they are born, is in India an absolute necessity: small wonder therefore that on the one hand the English for instance have there straightway constituted a caste of their own; and that on the other hand converts to Islam—aye, and to Christianity!—have likewise inevitably formed castes and sub-castes. What else could have done Ram Mohan Roy and his followers, who rejected, and were rejected by, Orthodox Hindu society, but

¹ Loc. cit., pp. 279-280.

form a society of their own? English society would not incorporate them; to let themselves be assimilated by Native Christian or Anglo-Indian society was equally out of the question: so was there really any alternative for them, but to develop into a caste with a social and religious code, a *dharma*, of their own?

Again, Ram Mohan Roy needs had to begin by forming an élite; in fact, he can truly be called the father of the modern intelligentsia in India. Nor would it be doing justice to this Brahmo élite, were one not to mention that it contains the men, thanks to whom, more than to others, India occupies culturally the front rank, which it actually does to-day in the eyes of the rest of the world. Rabindranath Tagore is to-day a household treasure throughout the world of letters; Sir Jagadish Bose is almost equally famous in the domains of science. Again, the first Indian to be received as a Peer of the Realm into the body of English nobility, Lord Sinha, was, like these other two great Bengalis, a member of the Brahmo Samaj. I only mention these by name: but cannot forbear personally to testify to the charm of intellect and character, which quite generally distinguishes the men and women of Brahmo society, and which makes them an élite, of whom any nation might be proud.

And this élite has really been what the Brahmo Samaj was intended to be: a leaven, working away gradually from above downwards, leavening the whole mass of Indian society. In the event, the Brahmo leaven, when reaching other strata of society, other regions of India, other periods of India's evolution, became transformed—often so radically that no connection between such growths and the original Brahmo germ-cell is suspected: the fact remains and becomes manifest to patient research, that the connection exists and that, however indirectly, Ram Mohan Roy and his Brahmo Samaj form the starting-point for all the various Reform Movements—whether in Hindu Religion, Society or Politics—which have agitated India during the past hundred years and which have led to her wonderful Renaissance in these our own days.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

In Bengal itself the leading politicians have practically all arisen out of the "Brahmo" *milieu*; but with this development we shall deal in our next chapter, when we come to consider the Political Movement in India. Here it will be appropriate to speak of the only other religious movement which has been predominantly Bengali: the one which looks up to Paramahansa Ramakrishna (1834-1886) as its founder, though it is perhaps more correct to state that the organization itself of the Ramakrishna Mission is entirely due to a fervid disciple of the Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), who conceived and founded it eleven years after his master's death, and four years after that famous Parliament of Religions which he had attended in 1893. At Chicago Vivekananda proclaimed the *Vedanta* as the grand, universal, super-religion of the world—and he has certainly never lacked successors in the United States, where the preachments of *yogis* and *swamis* have ever since found ready audiences. Theosophy had just come to the fore in the West, and indeed had already gained its first adherents in India too: Keshav Chandra Sen, Vivekananda and Mrs. Besant were in fact all, in their own way, reaching after a universal religion based on Vedantism and Eclecticism.

In Bengal itself, the Ramakrishna Mission makes its principal appeal nowadays by the splendid social service, in which its members engage—dispensaries, orphanages, schools, etc.—and these activities are, to some extent, also carried on outside their native Province, as for instance in Madras, Bangalore and Bombay, but their headquarters remain at the Belur Math on the outskirts of Calcutta. Their admirers—such for instance as the great Indian Y.M.C.A. leader, the late K. T. Paul¹—still see in "the Ramakrishna Movement the most living as

¹ Karakarayan T. Paul, *The British Connection with India*, London, 1927, p. 50.

well as the most characteristic expression of Indian nationalism. Truly centred on the Brahma Sutras, faithful also to the interpretation of Sankara, the Ramakrishna Order has still taken a clear step forward, by reading into *Karma Yoga* selfless Service in the most human sense of the term." To me this appraisal of their actual influence seems somewhat exaggerated: the fact remains, that since Vivekananda's death, in the absence of a successor, willing or capable of filling the role of a national figure, the Society continues to do meritorious social service work and acts in this respect as a leaven of undoubted power and usefulness.

UPADHYAYA AND ANIMANANDA

A classmate of Vivekananda and friend both of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and of Keshav Chandra Sen was Bhawani Charan Banerji Upadhyaya (1861-1907), a Brahman of Bengal, who, in 1886, joined the Brahmo Samaj and quickly became one of its most brilliant members. Brahmos from Sindh (where the Samaj had established itself since 1868) prevailed upon him to follow them to Hyderabad, where he founded (in 1888) a model school for boys and at once rose to be the leader of the whole local Brahmo Samaj. But religious doubts began to assail him and by 1890 he had felt constrained to sever his connection with the Samaj. In the year following he was baptized, first by an Anglican clergyman, and six months later, conditionally, in the Catholic Church of Karachi. Henceforth Theophilus—or as he translated the name into Sanskrit, Brahmabandhav—Upadhyaya had only one wish: to let all his countrymen know and enjoy the Truth, which he himself had found. He became a Catholic *sannyasi*,¹ edited an apologetical journal *Sophia* and until 1898 laboured in Sindh

¹ Ascetic.

at the conversion of India. In this labour he maintained a strictly Indian form of life and action, for he knew only too well, that what Hindus had by this time come to refuse, was not so much the Christian faith, as its European form.

A passage of St. Augustine (Tract 49 in Joannem) perhaps better than anything seems to me to reveal how this psychological inhibition is caused. Commenting on John xi. 47, St. Augustine explains the unwillingness of the Jewish élite of Our Lord's time to accept Him, by saying "*Hoc timuerunt, ne, si omnes in Christum crederent, nemo remaneret, qui adversus Romanos civitatem Dei templumque defenderet; quoniam contra ipsum templum et contra suas paternas leges doctrinam Christi esse sentiebant.*" Applied to modern India and its élite how better analyse their resistance to Christ than by thus paraphrasing St. Augustine: "They fear that, if all believed in Christ, none would be left to defend their own divine civilization and polity against the Western invaders; for they feel Christ's doctrine to be opposed to their own piety and to their own ancestral traditions."

There it seems to me lies the true impediment to India's conversion, and until India can be convinced, not only by word but by deed, that Christ has not come to eradicate all that constitutes Indian civilization and piety, and self-determination and freedom, but rather has come to restore the ancient patrimony of Indians to its pristine purity and to transform it with a new glory of perfection—until then, humanly speaking, no conversion of India as such, and as a whole, can be expected.

Unfortunately the attitude of Missionaries in India was at that time still a very different one. As long as Brahmabandhav restricted himself to purely religious apologetics they welcomed him—as well they might: but, as for his political views and aspirations, they seemed to most of them frankly impious. In the first years after his reception into the Catholic Church Brahmabandhav proved a doughty opponent of the Arya

Samaj (q.v.i.), and of what he stigmatized¹ as "the grotesque theories of Mrs. Besant and the diabolical errors of Vivekananda." He dreamt of the creation of a genuinely Indian Order of Friars, who would know their St. Thomas as well as the Vedanta. In 1899 he tried with the approval of the Bishop of Nagpur to realize this plan in Jabalpur with a few companions (of whom a Sindhi, Animananda, was one); but after a year he gave up the attempt and settled down in Calcutta. Like the rest of India, this son of India too had been seized by the political *Sturm und Drang* which swept his country; and as a consequence he was gradually coming to the conclusion that before India could become Catholic, she must be politically free and that otherwise it would be impossible to extirpate the bane of Europeanism which he found so disastrously rampant in all the Christian Missions of the period. As a consequence, Brahmanandhav's interest shifted from religion to politics: his weekly *Sophia*, as published in Calcutta, became in the first place a political paper. He naturally took the side of the Boers in their war against the British, and of the Chinese against the European Powers in the so-called "Boxer Revolt." In this latter connection he even spoke of the "unholy alliance" between foreign Missionaries and foreign Powers in China. Without going into all the details, suffice it to say, that Brahmanandhav was getting into ever-growing difficulties with the ecclesiastical authorities and that his *Sophia* came to a dead stop. Other magazines and daily papers, purely political, took successively its place, and especially his paper *Sandhya* (founded in 1904) is noteworthy as it soon became the leading nationalist vernacular paper of his time.

After a short scholastic venture with Animananda and Tagore—of which more presently—Brahmanandhav went in 1902 for a short visit to Europe. Returned thence in 1903, he threw himself, body and soul, into the political fight provoked by Lord

¹ A. Vāth, *Im Kampfe mit der Zauberwelt des Hinduismus*, Bonn, 1928, p. 128.

Curzon. It was the Upadhyaya, who at this time conceived the idea of National Colleges—educational institutions, unconnected not only with Government, but with a Western outlook—an idea, later taken up again so forcefully by Mr. Gandhi, when he launched his first Non-Violent Revolution in 1921. Brahmabandhav soon became one of the most feared critics of the British Government in India, and in 1907 was arrested for sedition. Under trial he went into hospital for an operation and died of its after-effects, quite unexpectedly. It seems clear that he never apostatized and that he died as a faithful Catholic: but his political friends who came and fetched his body, cremated it after the Hindu manner. Thus the death, no less than the life, of this great Catholic patriot was a tragedy. The greatest tragedy of all is the fact that the impression was thereby created as if there were a necessary antithesis between Swaraj and Catholicism. It is idle to apportion blame at this late hour; but one wonders whether all Catholics have even yet realized the necessity of seeing to it that this fancied antithesis is done with now and for ever. If only this lesson were learnt from it, even the tragedy of Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya's life and death will not have been in vain.

Reverting now to Animananda,¹ he was born in 1868 at Hyderabad (Sindh) as Rewachand Gyanchand. As a child of five, he became the disciple of a Hindu *sannyasi*: and a *brahmachari*² he has remained ever since. Put later on to school, he felt the inadequacy of his teachers so much, that as a boy of twelve he resolved himself to become a teacher—and a more sympathetic one than those he had had. Similarly he even at that age already felt that one day he would become a Christian and attentively frequented a Bible-class at a local Protestant school, of which in the event he became assistant master. In 1888 he first met Brahmabandhav, who at that time was master at St. Patrick's School, Hyderabad. When Brahmabandhav gave up

¹ "Bliss-in-Littleness"—a *sannyasi* name coined by himself.

² Lit. "Priest-Aspirant," a learner: the first stage of a Brahman's life.

this post, in order to become a Catholic *sannyasi*, his friend Rewachand took his place. By 1893 he offered himself for baptism at the hands of the Catholic missionary of the place, a German Jesuit: he received the name Paul, but after a year he decided, like Brahmabandhav, to become a *sannyasi* and took the name of Animananda. In 1897 the two joined forces, and in 1901 made the attempt of reviving the old Indian ideal of paedagogy. They started in Calcutta a school for high-caste Hindus, to be run on these lines, and after a few months were joined there by a third companion, Rabindranath Tagore, son of the famous Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, and of the same age as Upadhyaya. Rabindranath prevailed upon them to transfer their school to a country-seat of his father, near Bolpur; and thus began Shantiniketan, which in the thirty years which have lapsed since, has developed into the famous International University of the great Bengali Poet, whose name has become a household word of the whole world.

But the collaboration of the three soon came to an end, and in 1902 both Brahmabandhav and Animananda had to leave Shantiniketan; the former, because he had too much influence over the Poet; the latter, because he had too much influence over the boys—as Animanandra once smilingly explained to me. Thereupon the two Catholic friends founded a new school, once more in Calcutta: but as Animananda looked with suspicion upon his associate's plan of "converting India through Hinduism," the two separated—and alone (and penniless) Animananda in 1904 founded a school of his own. Started in a small room in a Calcutta tenement, with three pupils, the school yet soon attracted public attention, both on account of the novel method of teaching employed and of the surprising success, which attended this method. With the steady growth of the institution, it has been again and again removed to ever larger premises, until 1923, when Animananda was able to secure a large plot of land in a garden suburb, of northern

Calcutta. There this Boys' Own Home—to give it its proper title—is flourishing as a school *sui generis*, which has educated many generations of boys belonging to the best families of Calcutta and has impregnated them with Animananda's own lovable spirit. To-day it consists of 60 boys with six masters, of whom two—an M.A. and a B.A.—are old pupils of the Home. The boys themselves have to do all the manual work required for the upkeep of the place and have—in turn—to do the cooking of the midday meal. This Boys' Own Home aims at being a complement to the parental home and keeps its members all day long within its precincts, which include a large garden and a swimming pool. The curriculum provides for English, Sanskrit, history, mathematics, etc., etc., as well as for weaving, spinning, carpentering, and suchlike arts; elastic subject-groups take the place of stereotyped classes. From a paedagogic point of view the whole scheme is quite unorthodox, but singularly successful. Every pupil yet presented for the University Entrance Examination has passed—most of them with signal honours. A fervent Catholic himself, Animananda has never tried to force conversions, but, wise in his own generation, has contented himself with “preparing the way for the Lord”: but his living faith permeates visibly the whole Home created by him. Since a couple of years a boarding-house with a few Catholic boys—mostly Sindhis like himself—has been started in connection with the Home; and one can only hope that from amongst them a successor may rise, to carry on this noble and self-denying work of a true educational genius, who spurns mass-production and limelight, and, true to his chosen name, seeks—and finds—his blessedness in humility.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

I have on a number of occasions already had to refer to the Theosophical Society; and it is time I explained its success and

acclimatization in India. "The Mysterious Madame," H. P. Blavatsky (1831-1891), had founded this Society in 1875 in the United States, in conjunction with Col. H. S. Olcott (1832-1907). They both came to India in 1879, and in 1886 Adyar, a suburb of Madras, became the headquarters of the Society. Mme Blavatsky, however, made London her real home and Olcott, though frequently touring India, leant rather towards Ceylon and its Buddhism. If the Theosophical Society has become a force in India, it undoubtedly owes that success principally to another figure—that of Mrs. Annie Besant. Born in 1847 and married to an Anglican clergyman when she was twenty, Mrs. Besant early lost her Christian faith and obtained after a few years a separation from her husband (who only died in 1917), the Court appointing the husband guardian of their two children. She has in her *Autobiography*,¹ which she published in 1893, left us a picture of her mental attitude which led to this matrimonial tragedy: "I, accustomed to freedom, impulsive, very hot tempered, and proud as Lucifer . . ." In 1874 "an event occurred," she continues,² "which coloured all my succeeding life. I met Charles Bradlaugh." She threw herself, body and soul, into his "National Secularist Society," and became his intimate private secretary, co-worker and disciple; her enthusiasm, energy and eloquence being placed at the service of any cause that seemed sufficiently Radical.

All this filled her life for ten crowded years. In the meantime, in 1882, she had made her first contact with Theosophy, and in 1883 with Socialism. On both issues, which took her by storm, a break with Bradlaugh became inevitable; she made her choice, and in 1889 formally joined the Theosophical Society. Two years later both H. P. Blavatsky and Charles Bradlaugh died and Mrs. Besant, doubly alone, left in 1893 for India, where (at the age of 46) she began her real lifework.

¹ P. 81.

² P. 133.

Now the Theosophical Society, in the judgment of an extremely shrewd Indian observer,¹ was from the day it came to India, allied to the Hindu Revival Movement; but as he continues,² "The Buddha and Mahatmas of Olcott and Blavatsky had no reference to our religious life or traditions." It was Mrs. Besant who first amongst Theosophists preached the wisdom of Shri Krishna and the Bhagavid Gita. In Mme Blavatsky's Theosophy, the emphasis of which was unmistakably more on the occult than on what could be called truly spiritual, Mrs. Besant found a bridge between matter and mind.³ She, however, did not remain on that bridge for long, but went rapidly across and eventually turned that Theosophy, at least in India, into something specifically Hindu. As can be well imagined, the apparent conversion to Hinduism of an Englishwoman, who identified herself not only in the abstract, but in her actual company, dress, food and manners with the Hindus, made a tremendous impression and, as Mr. B. C. Pal believes,⁴ "helped to rehabilitate our national religion to thousands of our English educated countrymen." This education "had commenced to turn increasing numbers into rank atheists, especially in Madras"⁵ and there this English atheist, turned Hindu, naturally had a success in stemming this tide of free thought, which no Indian of the time could have had. At that time of her career, Mrs. Besant was almost violently Hindu, and Mr. Pal records⁶ that at the start "her condemnation of almost all our modern religious movements (Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Vivekananda) had been exceedingly narrow and bitter." She disliked Bengalis, because they "had the taint of the denational spirit of the Brahmo Samaj,"⁷ and in this Brahmo Samaj "which was emphasizing the revolt of individual reason and

¹ Bepin Chandra Pal in his *Mrs. Besant—A Psychological Study*, published in Madras in 1913, p. 103.

² *Ibid.*, p. 110.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 571.

conscience"¹ she saw "the most powerful antagonist of her theosophical propaganda."² Mr. Pal, who himself is a Brahmo, cannot help observing that "in the early years of her theosophic mission Mrs. Besant thought we could solve our present-day problems by the revival and reintroduction of ancient ideals and institutions, that long ages ago had been killed by time"³ and naturally, Religious Reformers and Orthodox Hindus both joined at first in asking "what right this lady from England had, to pose as a teacher of higher Hindu thought?"⁴ "The legend of her previous birth as a pure Brahman could not explain away this open outrage on Hindu orthodoxy of posing as an interpreter of Hindu *Sastras*."⁵

Mrs. Besant, when she arrived in India in 1893, said herself in an Adyar Convention Lecture⁶: "I, an outcaste, while still an outcaste, ought to sit at your feet"—yet the astonishing fact remains, that in less than no time it was the others, the Hindus, who sat at her feet or who, at least, did not dispute her right of posing as the Defender of their Hindu Faith. Hindus found her useful and so they acquiesced in the role she had assumed, even if few only have positively espoused her claims and become real converts to Theosophy. It was her method of explaining away, instead of attacking, the abuses and errors of Hinduism which naturally gained her the applause of the multitude of those who were too inert for any reform, or who actually benefited from a state of affairs which on larger grounds they ought to have opposed. Mrs. Besant's chief accomplishment in the Hindu cause was the Central Hindu School, which she founded at Benares in 1898, with the avowed purpose of teaching Hinduism to Hindus, to give to Hinduism a spear-head and to assure its future. In her *Autobiography*⁷ of 1893 already she

¹ Bepin Chandra Pal, *Mrs. Besant: a Psychological Study*, p. 566.

² *Ibid.*, p. 569. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 385. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 245. ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

⁶ Srinivasa Angar, *Letter to Mrs. Besant*, Madras, 1915, p. 9.

⁷ Pp. 1-2.

had thus defined the task she set herself: "The Indian work is, first of all, the revival, strengthening and uplifting of the ancient religions—Hinduism, Zoroastrianism and, in Ceylon and Burmah, Buddhism. This has brought with it a new self-respect, a pride in the past, a belief in the future, and, as an inevitable result, a great wave of patriotic life, the beginning of the rebuilding of a nation." That Central School of hers was to be the lever, whereby all else would be achieved in time; upon it she therefore lavished all her indomitable energy, her talents and her affection. Through years of stress and strain she nursed it, until it had reached the status of a college; but when her dream of an entire Hindu University at Benares had, in 1915, come true, it was not into her lap that this ripe fruit fell. A sorry affair had come to a head in 1910 to 1912, when a lawsuit raged about the guardianship of two Brahman boys, one of whom, Krishnamurti, she destined to become a new Messiah—a role which he himself has repudiated, since he reached manhood and independence. This affair, coupled with the unsavoury Leadbeater scandal, did Mrs. Besant much harm in Orthodox Hindu circles, and the achievement of the Hindu University of Benares stands now to the credit of another, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (born 1862), whose lifework it has become. At this time Mrs. Besant also began to take to politics, which until then she had shunned, and this stage of her life we shall properly consider in the second part of this history. Her religious influence anyhow waned simultaneously, and when she advocated such social reforms as that of post-puberty marriages, the Orthodox Hindus were not slow to turn upon and rend her.¹ As for the Theosophical Society, of which, since Olcott's death in 1907, she has been the President, I think it is no exaggeration to say that, in India at least, it is already a thing with only a past and without a future.

¹ The already quoted pamphlet of Srinivasa Aiyangar is an example.

DAYANAND SARASVATI

Turning now to the Arya Samaj and its founder, Dayanand Sarasvati (1824-1883), we shall find ourselves in an atmosphere altogether different from that in which our enquiries have hitherto moved. The anglicizing nature of the Brahmo Samaj we have already emphasized: the Theosophical Society and much of Brahmabandhav's and Animananda's activities were dead opposed to this, it is true; but all these movements catered really only for a small élite. With the Arya Samaj, on the contrary, we have reached a movement, whose founder never knew English, and who made his appeal, not to an English educated élite, but to the broad masses of his fellow countrymen. This fact alone suffices to place him straightway into a new category. As a Brahman he devoted himself to Sanskrit and, besides his native Gujerati, he also knew Hindi: but he never had any modern Western education at all. From 1845 to 1860 he was just one of the innumerable Hindu ascetics, who traverse Hindusthan in every direction, engaged upon an everlasting pilgrimage. At the end of this period of growth his ideas had become clear: polytheism, the use of images and the taboos of caste were un-Vedic and he was called to restore the pure Vedic religion of the Aryans. He now began to preach his new doctrine and was particularly fond of disputations with Orthodox Hindus, Moslems and Christian Theologians. At first he tried to come to terms with the Brahmo Samaj, and there was a conference in Calcutta in 1869, but it came to nothing. The year following he had a public monster disputation with 300 leading Orthodox Brahman divines, at Benares, the sacred Hindu centre of India; and it is from this that Lajpat Rai¹ dates "the effective beginning of Dayanand's mission for a reformed Hindu Church." However it was not until 1875 that he formally started the Arya Samaj in Bombay,

¹ *The Arya Samaj*, London, 1915 (Longmans), p. 50.

where he had kept in touch with the Prarthana Samaj, the local off-shoot of the Brahmo Samaj, of which I shall have more to say anon. It was also at Bombay that he published his great treatise, *Satyartha Prakash*, which expounded his doctrine and formulated it as a doctrine *sui generis*. But it was in Lahore that the final revision of his doctrine took place (in 1877); it was there, and in the same year, that he met a congenial group of persons ready to take it up (*inter alia* Lajpat Rai's father). It was in Lahore that the headquarters of the Samaj were finally established: and ever since the Punjab has been its real home.

In Lahore a Brahmo Samaj had been started already in 1863, and it seemed likely to take root there, as Sikhism had in many ways prepared the way for it. But Dayanand's Arya Samaj overwhelmed and absorbed this movement: in this he was more successful in the Punjab than in his own Province; for according to Parekh¹ Dayanand had already tried to capture the Prarthana Samaj of Ahmedabad and to convert it into an Arya Samaj, but had failed. Whilst most of the Brahmos in Lahore became Arya Samajists, a very prominent member, Satyanand Agnihotri (born in 1850), went his own ways altogether and in 1887 founded a Samaj of his own, the Deva Samaj, which combines with the other usual features of Indian Reform Movements—i.e. social reform and service; educational and charitable enterprises, etc.—the very unusual one of being militantly atheistic! Its centre has remained Lahore and in the Punjab 3,597 people returned themselves at the Census of 1921 as Deva Samajists.²

Reverting to the Arya Samaj, this Society has developed into

¹ Loc. cit., p. 226.

² Glasenapp, loc. cit., pp. 36 ff., analyses the tenets of this small and unimportant society in detail. They are interesting as an example of the typically Hindu method of incorporating a foreign intrusion in this case Western rationalism) and of its readiness to turn in this process even atheism into a Hindu sect.

a by no means unimportant and quite distinctive sect. Its doctrine borders on the grotesque and may be summed up as the assertion, that the Vedas, as interpreted by Dayanand, contain all the Truth. This interpretation of his, let me hasten to add, is not only opposed to all traditional Hindu, but equally to all Western Sanskritist exegesis, as indeed to all common sense. It is a curious amalgam of rationalism, utilitarianism, nationalism and Hindu traditional ideology. Images are prohibited with a Puritan iconoclast ardour; but a daily sacrifice of butter in the hearth fire is enjoined. The cow is sacred, but caste is wrong. Alcohol is evil *per se*; on the other hand marriages must not be entered into before the age of 25 (resp. 16) of boys and girls. Polytheism is quite wrong and un-Vedic; but Christian and Moslem monotheism is equally false. As will be seen, we have here a curious mixture of true and false, of what is statesmanlike and what childish. The principles he laid down for caste, for instance (viz.—that a person's profession must not be determined by birth, but by fitness, and that a marriage likewise must not be fettered by caste-taboos, but be left to the free choice of the contracting parties) are eminently sensible and have done really yeoman service in the uplift of the outcastes, to whom the Arya Samaj has come as a true social deliverer.

The Arya Samaj was meant to realize the ideal of unifying India, nationally, socially and religiously. Dayanand saw especially in Islam a factor of permanent discord in India and his followers have been foremost in reclaiming "lost" Hindus and making Hinduism aggressive. Physically very big, Dayanand delighted also mentally in taking the offensive: in this he was usually very rough, often even coarse, and always eminently "popular." His arguments were those of a semi-educated person and in virulence equal to those of the most bigoted obscurantist Orangeman: in fact Dayanand has coined the word *pop* in Hindi (fr. pope), to designate any minister of

religion, who lives an easy life at the cost of the adherents he gulls! Glasenapp¹ cites an amusing instance of the amazing exegesis of the Vedas, propounded by Dayanand: where others are satisfied to translate Rigveda 1, 2, 7 as follows: "I invoke Mitra and Varuna for the success of my poem"—Dayanand loftily informs his adherents that it means that water is generated by the combination of hydrogen and oxygen! If he is capable of such puerilities in the case of Hindu scriptures, one can imagine what treatment Bible and Koran (both of which he only knew in Hindu translations) received at his hands. His method of insulting and rendering suspect his adversaries, has naturally not spared Christian missionaries: and much of the current popular prejudice against Christianity has been created or at least fomented by Dayanand and his disciples. I quote in this connection Dayanand's commentary upon Matthew iv. 19 ("Faciam vos fieri piscatores hominum"): "This is the prototype of Christian missionary activity, which aims at catching men. Just as a man who can catch much fish, becomes thereby famous and rich, so also does a Christian missionary acquire a big name and fortune, if he can entrap many Indians." It is obvious that Christian missionaries have as a consequence not exactly looked upon the Arya Samaj as their greatest friends; perhaps even have they not as a rule done full justice to the good of which this movement has undoubtedly also been productive. To end the distressing disunion of India and to make India socially one, Dayanand wanted to eliminate the differences of caste and class; to make it religiously one, he wanted to substitute his Aryan for all other religions; to make it nationally one, he was led to emancipate it from foreign rule. The modern *Sangathan* tone given to Hinduism² is undoubtedly largely due to his influence; that,

¹ Loc. cit., p. 20. This author gives a very good idea of the sect in this little monograph of his, which I have largely followed in the above.

² See below, p. 52.

however, this is merely giving "tit" for the traditional Moslem "tat" must likewise be admitted. With him rowdiness has entered Indian public life: Tilak merely carried on the lines Dayanand had inaugurated. In this rough-and-tumble Dayanand, of course, not only gave, but received: his great disciple Lajpat Rai feelingly describes¹ "the obloquy and persecution to which Swami Dayananda was exposed in his lifetime—assassins were hired by Orthodox Hindus to kill him; he was called a hired emissary of the Christians, an apostate, an atheist, and so on." It is noteworthy that during Lord Lytton's *darbar* in 1877 Dayanand, Syed Ahmad (the great Moslem reformer) and Keshav Chandra Sen met at Delhi: but the expectation of their finding a formula for uniting proved necessarily vain, seeing the contradiction in their respective principles and the incompatibility of their characters. Lajpat Rai on the other hand bears witness to the fact that H. P. Blavatsky was highly impressed by Dayanand; and when the latter died, Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, who was passing through Lucknow at the time, "paid a public tribute to the Swami's memory," which Lajpat Rai² considers of sufficient importance to record. Mrs. Besant similarly³ dates "the undermining of the belief in the Superiority of the White Races to the spreading of the Arya Samaj and," she adds, "the Theosophical Society."

THE ARYA SAMAJ

At all events, the excellent and far-reaching work the Arya Samaj has done in the domain of social reform is undoubted. After its founder's death that part of the work indeed was

¹ In his *The Arya Samaj*, p. 60.

² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

³ In her presidential Congress address in 1917 (published separately in London under the title *The Case for India*, p. 27).

emphasized and great educational and famine relief enterprises added to it, whilst the purely religious propaganda slipped a little more to the background. Dayanand was indeed fortunate of leaving at his death behind him a trio of youth to whom the consolidation and propagation of his Arya Samaj is mainly due: Lala Hansraj, Pandit Guru Datta and Lala Lajpat Rai. In the very year of Dayanand's death, 1883, it had been decided to perpetuate his memory by founding a school (afterwards the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College), the management of which was to remain in Arya Samaj hands, whilst the teaching staff should at least consist only of Indians, nor were subsidies to be taken from Government. If that plan came to fruition, and the school was eventually opened in 1886, it was certainly due to the three young men mentioned. Lala Hansraj, who had just terminated a brilliant university career, came forward to give himself, free, to the scheme proposed; a sacrifice made possible by the even greater sacrifice of his brother, who agreed to remain in business to support both of them!¹ For twenty-eight years Hansraj remained Principal, first of the school, and, since 1889, of the college, into which it developed—and under him it became the foremost agency for planting a sturdy and independent Nationalism in the Punjab, which has a reputation for being somewhat more stolid and less intellectual than other Provinces—such as Bengal, Madras and Bombay. At the same time it cannot be denied that this education given in English and according to an English curriculum is not altogether in the original spirit of Dayanand. No wonder that in the Body discussions developed, especially as the College Party pressed for a very liberal interpretation generally of their Master's doctrine, whilst the Mahatma Party endeavoured to be, not modern, but Vedic, and hearkened back to the traditional Brahman ideal of ascetic *sannyasis*.²

The latter party, under Munshi Ram, founded in 1902 the

¹ C. F. Andrews, *Renaissance*, p. 40.

² Hindu monks.

Gurukul on nine hundred acres of forest land given to it on the upper reaches of the Ganges near Hardwar. This is one of the most remarkable educational institutions in the world: boys of about seven enter it and for sixteen years live there under vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, without ever leaving the place during that time or being allowed to meet their relatives. They are there entirely under the influence of their *gurus*¹ who themselves are traditional *sannyasis*. The common language is Sanskrit, and the most important discipline the Vedas; but English and modern sciences are also taught. Gurukul therefore is something like the Grand Seminary of the sect and indeed it supplies it with an élite of leaders and missionaries, whose quality cannot but reflect the magnificent training in devotion, self-sacrifice and single-mindedness which they there receive. The Arya Samaj is foremost in its *shuddhi* work of re-Hinduizing whole castes—mostly of the depressed classes—which have lapsed into Islam, and it has remained militant and popular, with the result that at the Census of 1921 468,000 persons returned themselves as Arya Samajists: a very different tale from that which the figures for the Brahmo Samaj have told us. Still, it must be observed that out of that total as many as 451,000 belong to the North (Punjab, Kashmir, Oudh and Agra), so that their percentage elsewhere has remained meagre enough. Some of the Arya *sannyasis* have become prominent political figures: one of the best known, Shraddhanand, fell six years ago the victim of a Moslem fanatic's knife. Sowing the wind, they are somewhat apt to reap the whirlwind . . .

The political side of the Arya Samaj, inherent in the Nationalist outlook of its creed, has received a special impetus through

¹ "Teacher" in the reverential sense of *Rabbi* (cf. The Magdalen's "Rabboni"—"Guruji!"). It is interesting to see, how much Gurukul and the Boys' Own Home have in common, notwithstanding their fundamental differences.

Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928), whose first independent contribution to the sect consisted in the Famine Relief he organized in the years 1897-1900—"the first time," as he says himself with justifiable pride,¹ "that a non-Christian private agency started a non-official movement for the relief of distress caused by famine." This work copied the methods of many Christian missions and "gathered" large numbers of starving children into Arya Samajist orphanages, of which those at Ferozepur and Meerut are large institutions, carrying on their humanitarian (and proselytizing) work with undiminished zeal and success to the present day. Lala Munshi Ram declared² in 1907: "The Arya Samaj in its collective capacity is a *sannyasi* and therefore cannot have anything to do with politics"; the fact remains, that, in the words of Lajpat Rai,³ "the foreign rulers of India have never been quite happy about the Arya Samaj. They have always disliked its independence of tone and its propaganda of self-confidence, self-help and self-reliance. The national side of its activities has aroused their antipathy." In 1905 Lajpat Rai accompanied Gokhalé to England, to protest against the various Curzon policies, and from there visited also the United States. His whole subsequent career is bound up with politics and will therefore be considered in the second part. At this point I can sum up the Arya Samaj as a religious force working for social reform, which remains a great and powerful factor to this day in the national life of India, and one seriously to be reckoned with in its future.

THE PRARTHANA SAMAJ

I shall now turn to another group of endeavours, which, neither as blindly anglicizing as the Brahmo Samaj, nor as violently indianizing as the Arya Samaj, has rather tended to keep the golden mean of cool, shrewd common sense, developing the

¹ *The Arya Samaj*, p. 212.

² *Ibid.*, p. 170

³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

type of the practical intellectual for which Maharashtra is famous, just as Bengal is for its poetic feeling and emotional enthusiasm, and Madras for its pure intellectualism and legal acumen. In Maharashtra, then, the first offshoot of the Brahmo Samaj was founded in 1849, as the Paramahansa Sabha: it did not live long or ever come to much, however, and when Keshav Chandra Sen visited Bombay in 1867, he launched therefore a new body, which—to mark its own distinct individuality from the very start—was not called Brahmo, but Prarthana Samaj.¹ This difference in name was all the more called for, as the Prarthana Samajists, neither then nor subsequently, have looked upon themselves as adherents of a new religion or of a new sect, outside and alongside of the general Hindu body, but simply as a movement within it. In fact these men never were interested in religious speculation in the way that Keshav and Dayanand were: being of a more practical turn of mind, they rather concentrated upon Social Reform, as it came to be known—upon “works” rather than “faith.” As for the latter they considered themselves in the true line of the great Theistic (Vaishnavite) tradition of Maharashtra, made famous by such popular saints as Namdev, Tukaram² and Ramdas. All they strove to do was to apply this “love of God in the service of man” as the needs of the day demanded it, and it is characteristic that one of their foremost “works” is a Foundling Asylum and Orphanage at the great place of pilgrimage and central shrine of Maharashtra, Pandharpur. They concentrated on interdining and intermarriage, and widows’ remarriage; they ran night schools for the poorer classes, started a widows’ refuge and a Depressed Classes Mission. But if the Movement (which proclaimed itself³ a

¹ Prayer Congregation.

² His *abhangs* provide a large portion of the hymn-book of the Prarthana Samaj.” See Macnicol, loc. cit., p. 112.

³ Parekh, loc. cit., p. 211.

Protestant Hinduism, and was not uninfluenced by the English Unitarian writer Martineau) has in fact not got lost in the barren wilderness of Western Rationalism and Secularism,¹ that merit must be ascribed to one of the two guiding spirits of the Samaj—Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar (1837-1927) who was not only one of the greatest Sanskritists of his day, but a very devout follower of the Bhakti² religion of Tukaram. And here let me mention that Sir Ramkrishna's learning has found a permanent, institutional expression in the Bhandarkar Institute for Oriental Research in Poona, which has at last placed Indian Scholarship on a level with that of the great Western *savants*.

MAHADEV GOVIND RANADÉ

As for his great associate in the Samaj, this was Mahadev Govind Ranadé, who was born near Nasik in 1842, and died in Bombay in 1901. As his father was in the service of Kolhapur State (where Gokhalé was born!), his son was educated there, but in 1856 he joined the Elphinstone College, Bombay. In 1865 he took his M.A. degree and became the first Indian Fellow of the University of Bombay. In the following year he became an LL.B., and entered public service. In this he was, in 1871, made a sub-Judge in Poona, but from 1878 to 1881 he suffered much "Irish promotion" into outlying districts, as he had become politically suspect under the Lytton regime³: for was he not a Poona Brahman? But under Lord Ripon in 1881 he was made Presidency Magistrate in Bombay. In 1884

¹ Parekh, loc. cit., p. 214.

² The *via purgativa*, *illuminativa* and *unitiva* are in Hinduism called respectively, *karma*, *dnyana* and *bhakti marga*.

³ G. A. Mankar, *Mahadev Govind Ranadé : a Sketch of his Life and Works*, Bombay, 1902, 2 vols. Ganpatrao Mankar knew Ranadé personally since 1875, and was, like him, a Subordinate Judge.

Small Court Judge in Poona, and finally, on the death of Mr. Justice K. T. Telang (1851-1893), he succeeded him as High Court Judge in Bombay—a post which he occupied until his own death, eight years later. Such was the official career of a man who may truly be called the father of the Renascence in Western India and who, through the men of Western India whom he inspired and formed, may claim to be one of the forebears of that Renascence in India as a whole. Ranadé was deeply religious, but not theologically inclined. The contrast for instance between the monotheistic spirit and the polytheistic observances of his people and country struck him “as a puzzle which baffles the understanding”¹ “But,” he continues, “I offer no solution to it; because though I have been thinking about it for a long time, I have not yet been able to find a rational and consistent solution of the difficulty.” Again, it is Ranadé, who in the *Sachchidananda* of Hindu philosophy “found an analogy of these component parts of the Sanskrit name of God to the Christian Trinity: *sat* corresponding to the absolute existence of the Father, *chit* to the Logos, and *ananda* to the Holy Comforter.”²

This quotation alone suffices to show how profoundly Ranadé thought, though to a Catholic it must remain a real mystery, how such a man, possessed of so many parts of the Truth, failed to see Truth as a whole—as we see it. The fact remains that Ranadé, like so much of “practical” English Protestantism, sought in action a refuge from his torturing thoughts and “puzzles” and devoted himself mainly to Social Reform. Himself married when he was 13 and a widower at the age of 31, he wished to remarry a widow, but gave way to the wishes of his father, although he was, with Vishnu Shastri Pandit, one of the founders of the Widow Marriage Associa-

¹ I quote from Dr. A. J. Saunders' article in *The Young Men of India*, January 1931.

² G. A. Mankar, *Mahadev Govind Ranadé*, I, p. 195.

tion in 1861, which carried on such propaganda on the subject, that in 1869 the first such marriage actually took place; he took part in the wedding ceremony and defied excommunication by the Shankaracharya.¹ In 1862 he had become the English editor of an Anglo-Marathi weekly, the *Indu-Prakash*, and as such had an early part in moulding opinion on this and all other burning topics of the day and on public affairs generally. When in Poona, he became the life and soul of the Sarvajanik Sabha, founded in 1870 by Ganesh Vasudev Joshi,² and in 1878 started its *Quarterly Journal*, both of which had such decisive influence on the social and political reform movements in Maharashtra. The Indian National Congress founded by A. O. Hume in 1885 and of which we shall treat in detail in its proper place, owed much of its mental preparation to Ranadé, and though he, as a Judge, did not feel free to join a purely political body such as this, he inaugurated the practice, that, alongside of the annual session of the Congress, there should always be held Social Conferences, which he regularly attended and addressed until its fourteenth, held in Lahore in Christmas week of 1900, of which latter one, the address remains,³ though he could not deliver it in person, death, which overtook him three weeks later, having already cast its shadows ahead.

¹ Religious head of Orthodox Hindus.

² "In order," as said its Constitution, "that there should exist between Government and the people something in the shape of a mediating body which may afford to the latter facilities of knowing the real intention and objects of Government as well as adequate means for securing their rights, by making a true representation of the real circumstances in which they are placed." (See *The Constitution of the Poona "Sarvajanik Sabha" and its Rules*. Printed at the Dnyan Prakash Press, Poona, 1884.)

³ In *M. G. Ranadé's Miscellaneous Writings*, published by his wife in 1915 in Bombay. This volume contains *inter alia* all his speeches at these "Social Conferences."

THE DECCAN EDUCATION SOCIETY

It would indeed be difficult to enumerate and impossible to describe all the causes espoused, all the organizations started for their furtherance, all the influences wielded, by Ranadé. Mr. Andrews sums it all well up in saying that "the last and the most enduring aspect of the new reformation in India is linked up most closely with the name of Justice Ranadé, who," in his opinion, "comes nearest to Ram Mohan Roy and Syed Ahmad Khan in the largeness of vision and the magnanimity of character; but he was more advanced than either in the width of his constructive aim, his grasp of the principles underlying Western civilization and his application of them to Indian conditions."¹ Of all the important results initiated by his genius, the most remarkable of them remains yet to be told—I mean the Deccan Education Society, the founding of which in 1884 is directly due to Ranadé's spiritual leadership and in turn has produced the men who so largely have made the modern history of India to be what it is.

It was Vishnu Krishna Chiplunkar (1850-1882), one of those Poona Brahmans so obnoxious to the bureaucracy, who had resigned Government Educational Service, because he found his official position incompatible with his deep interest in the public affairs of his country and with the literary and journalistic expression he gave to it—it was actually Chiplunkar who in 1880 had started a private school, The New English School in Poona, with two younger friends of his, Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar (18 —1895), who like himself recognized the paramount need of making Western education available to the rising generation of Maharashtra, without exposing the latter to the anti-national bias of English educators. That these men aimed at more than mere school-mastering is proved by the fact that, as soon as they had

¹ Andrews, *Indian Renaissance*, pp. 135-136.

launched their New English School, they acquired a press, the Aryabhushan Press, and there produced two weeklies—the *Kesari* in Marathi, and the *Mahratta* in English. Chiplunkar, alas, died too young to be able to do more than set in motion what others have carried on—but it is noteworthy that the London *Graphic*¹ in an obituary on Chiplunkar's death called him "one of those pioneers of progress, who, if they become numerous enough, will some day make India a self-governing community."

After his death the promoters of the New English School had been joined by Vaman Shivaram Apté, who had resigned his post as Principal of a Government High School, to join the new venture: and under Ranadé's inspiration these men in 1884 formed themselves into the Deccan Education Society whose members were expected to do for patriotic motives what Christian missionaries were doing out of religious devotion. Starting from the premises that to mould the future of India it was necessary to take in hand the education of its youth and impregnate it with those ideas of patriotism and duty to the Motherland, which foreign instructors obviously were unable to impart: the members of this Society bound themselves to serve it for twenty years, and to be satisfied with a bare minimum of subsistence, amounting at the start to Rs. 75 *per mensem*. Unlike so much high falutin rhetoric and grandiose plans, which were so often the order of the day elsewhere, these men of Maharashtra saw a need and set about supplying it themselves as far as they were able to, in a very humble and modest manner at the start, not depending on generous gifts and sacrifices of other people, but in all simplicity and faith offering and sacrificing themselves. Poor men, most of them, their grit and devotion were worth more than all the wealth of Golconda: and their method, reproduced since in innumerable other institutions of

¹ Of May 16, 1882, quoted by N. C. Kelkar in his biographical sketch of Chiplunkar (Madras, 1918), p. 35.

a similar nature, has stood the test of time and succeeded beyond the wildest dreams of its originators. The small school, with which the original start was made, prospered exceedingly, and in the second year of its existence numbered already five hundred pupils. On the strength of such unmistakable popular support an Arts College was added and, under the name of Fergusson College, soon became the premier College of Maharashtra, which has put the Government College (Deccan College) of Poona altogether in the shade, so much so that there has been even some talk of shutting up the latter! Fergusson College in 1931 numbered 1,700 students.¹ In addition, the Society owns another College at Sangli—the Willingdon College, with about half that number of students; with a number of middle and preparatory schools to feed their colleges. And not enough with this, there has grown up in Poona another College, the New Poona College, run by another, but similar, Society, and likewise founded on a number of schools of its own and branching out ever farther afield! Fergusson College, however, still stands first, and in the last few years has come forward, specializing in yet another direction, by erecting very large hostels for boys from the "depressed" classes, who receive there their university education alongside of Brahman boys (and girls!) and taught by Brahman professors! And all this magnificent record has

¹ This number has been pronounced to be excessive, and to render proper supervision by the staff impossible: in fact, the Government have peremptorily ordered the Society to reduce the total number of students by 1933 to 1,200. This intervention of Government however has been really the sequel of a murderous attempt on the life of the Acting Governor of Bombay in July 1931, when he was paying a ceremonial visit to the college. A student, Gogate, fired point blank at Sir Ernest Hotson: the latter was fortunately quite unhurt, as a pocket-book stopped the bullet. The Government have since taken the view, that the present staff have lost control over the student body, and have threatened further action. Unfortunately colour is lent to this view by a personal vendetta which for some time of late years has raged amongst the life-workers of the Society. Cf. *The Servant of India* of April 7, 1932.

been achieved by purely native talent, without direct collaboration, even of the most fleeting kind, on the part of any non-Indian.

GOKHALÉ AND TILAK

One of the first and surely one of the most illustrious of the many subsequent "life-workers" enrolled by the Society was Gopal Krishna Gokhalé (1866-1915), who joined as such in 1885, having just completed his own university education: and never had *guru* more apt pupil than Ranadé in Gokhalé. He eventually became, from 1892 to 1902, Principal of the College, but all the tremendous work he put in for his Education Society was but a tithe of the general public work he did. Unfortunately there developed in the bosom of the Society a discord, which at times seemed seriously to menace its very existence. Agarkar was most keenly interested in all questions of social reform, as was Ranadé.¹ Tilak and Gokhalé rather tended towards politics. But whilst Gokhalé's heart ever beat for the cause of sound reform and remained true to Ranadé's lead, Tilak soon suffered a complete revulsion in this respect. For him politics always came first, and as soon as he discovered that social reform was "unpopular," he quickly decided to throw it overboard, provided he could enlist the religious fervour of the orthodox for his political plans. In this Tilak took the line which Dayanand had taken before, and Mrs. Besant was to take after him. In 1888 it came to a first open break: the *Kesari*, and *Mahratta*, which hitherto, under Agarkar, had served the cause of social reform, were now passed on to Tilak, whilst Agarkar founded a new organ of his own, the *Sudharak*, an Anglo-Marathi

¹ R. G. Pradhan in his *India's Struggle for Swaraj*, Madras, 1930, p. 69, says of Agarkar that "if the cause of social reform has made greater progress in the Deccan than in any other Province, it is due largely to his teachings. He represents the rationalistic and liberal element in the nationalist movement."

paper, of which Gokhalé became the English editor. But things went from bad to worse and the crisis came over the Age of Consent Bill of 1890, which naturally had been wholeheartedly worked for by Ranadé, Agarkar and Gokhalé, and the members of the Deccan Education Society in general. Tilak placed himself openly at the head of the orthodox opposition to this measure on the plea that it was intolerable that a foreign Government should force such a piece of legislation upon a subject-people. This filled the cup of the Reformers to overflowing, and in 1890 Tilak had to leave the Deccan Education Society. On the other hand, the battle over the Sarvajanic Sabha, which had become Poona's political club, and of which Gokhalé had been Secretary for eight years, fell to the Tilakites in 1896: Gokhalé and the Reformers were squeezed out of it and thereupon founded a political club of their own, the Deccan Sabha, of which Gokhalé, for the first five years of its existence, became the Secretary.

Tilak's whole mental attitude and the methods employed by him only become understandable on the suggestion that he, who posed as such a perfervidly Orthodox Hindu, was really at heart an Agnostic, who considered religion merely as a means of firing the masses with enthusiasm for his own cause, which was, first and last, political. Ethics was subordinated to patriotism: on a famous occasion in 1897, Gokhalé then absent in England and acting on information contained in letters received, had accused the military in Poona of having behaved outrageously in carrying out anti-plague measures; this accusation, when challenged to substantiate it, he found his informants unable to prove at all, and as an honourable man, Gokhalé in the form of an open apology to Lord Sandhurst and the Army thereupon made a public retraction of his former attack. Tilak stigmatized such conduct as that of a traitor, who had been bought by the enemies of his country, and brushed aside as utterly irrelevant the question, whether in fact the original

allegations had been true or false.¹ Tilak similarly started the popular movement against cow-killing, because it was popular and would plainly serve as a convenient stick wherewith to beat "the beef-eating alien," but the readiness with which he is credited of selling to Moslem butchers cows which had been presented to him by Hindu devotees does not betray an intrinsic love and veneration for the cow on his part. Again, he reorganized, or, one might almost say, invented the Ganpati festival, such as it is kept nowadays in Maharashtra, and turned it into an occasion for much political ribaldry and obscenity even. Religion thus deliberately abused and degraded, to become a means to a secular end, has—as one, who knows his India thoroughly, puts it²—"made the central thing in Hinduism to become *sangathan* rather than *sannyasa* and subordinated everything to what Dr. Moonje calls 'toning up Hindu muscles.'"³ To this intent Tilak's fertile brain in 1895 conceived of yet another movement—the Shivaji cult—instituting a national festival on the birthday anniversary of the great hero of Maharashtra. Funds were raised for erecting a memorial to Shivaji in Poona, and to this day the great meeting-place for nationalist assemblies in Poona is the Shivaji Mandir.³

¹ Lest the reader judge Tilak too harshly, may I make a quotation or two from Lord Ponsonby's recent book on *Falsehood in War Time*, London, 1932? "In war time," says he, "failure to lie is negligence, the doubting of a lie a misdemeanour, the declaration of truth a crime. When war is declared, truth is the first casualty." Not that I would make light of lying, but to prove how little a Western pot can call an Eastern kettle black, I realize, alas, that "in the arena of international conflict men have"—in the East as in the West—"placed patriotism above truthfulness as the indispensable virtue of statesmen"; that in the East, as in the West, only the few—men like Gokhalé and Lord Ponsonby—have the moral fibre to stand out.

² Dr. N. Macnicol in *Intern. Rev. of Miss.*, January 1929. *Sangathan* he defines as "a term used to designate the formation of a disciplined Hindu organization, whilst *sannyasa* represents the traditional Hindu ideal of abandonment of the world."

³ With the peculiar complexity of everything Indian, this matter of

Gokhalé neither lacked manliness nor was he the person to underrate the value of physical culture; but for him the primacy of the spiritual was axiomatic and therefore politics subordinate to ethics. Besides he had "fixed for his own life the characteristics of moderation and a certain sweet reasonableness, not only of manner, but of aim"¹ which he had found in the man whom in his student days he had chosen as his *guru*: Ranadé, whom Mankar calls "the most forgiving of men." Gokhalé was one of those truly great men—still rare in India, who rise above partizanship, who can warmly appreciate the good, even if initiated by an opponent, and who appraise men's actions, not by the exigencies of the moment, but by the great principles which transcend time. If it is certain that Gokhalé started as a Victorian agnostic, it is equally certain that he ended as a firm believer in that Providence which shapes all our ends and in that Inner Light which will lead man on to truth and righteousness, would he but follow it. Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light," was on his lips, when he administered the vow taken by would-be members: it was that Light which he himself ever strove to follow and which he endeavoured to kindle and feed in all those who in the encircling gloom of a *Kaliyuga* ("Iron Age") were after him to carry aloft the torch of service and sacrifice. If then Gokhalé was constitutionally opposed to what one might well call the Hindu Fascism of Tilak, he was equally averse to the flight from the world implied in a purely monastic ideal of contemplation and asceticism. He knew the value, and ardently desired it, of ascetic discipline and conquest of self: but the a Shivaji Memorial has been given a somewhat ludicrous turn, inasmuch as the great Shivaji Monument unveiled a few years ago in another quarter of the city has eventually been erected by non-Brahman and Government support, as a sly dig at the troublesome Poona Brahman (to whose caste Shivaji did not belong!), whilst for Tilak and his followers the Shivaji Mandir is of course merely intended as a protest against an alien Government!

¹ As H. W. Nevins has correctly analysed it in his *The New Spirit in India*, London, 1908, p. 34.

men thus equipped he wished to throw into the very dust of the arena of public life, to act there as a disinterested élite, who were out to serve, not themselves, but others—"the modern type of Indian *sannyasi*, who wears the garb of ordinary men, mingles with them as one of themselves, and yet inwardly is the renouncer," as Mr. Jinarajadasa has well expressed it in one of his writings.¹

THE SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

To realize this ideal, Gokhalé founded in 1905, when he had completed his covenanted service of twenty years in the Deccan Education Society, his celebrated Servants of India Society for which he had laid down as basic principle the postulate that "public life must be spiritualized."

In the preamble to his constitution of the Society, he continues: "A fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the Motherland, a dauntless heart which refuses to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger, a deep faith in the purpose of Providence which nothing can shake—equipped with these, the worker must start on his mission and reverently seek the joy which comes of spending oneself in the service of one's country." The men whom he wished to attract were such as were "prepared to devote their lives to the cause of the country in a religious spirit," and the very rules of the Society define its object as that of training "national missionaries for the service of India, and to promote, by all constitutional means, the true interests of the Indian people."

This is the spirit in which Gokhalé founded the Society, undoubtedly first inspired thereto by A. O. Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress, who had insisted, twenty years

¹ *The Meeting of the East and the West*, Madras, 1921, p. 64.

previously, that the constitution of Congress shall be "free from personal ambitions; the head merely the chief servant and his council assistant servants"—and Hume's biographer indeed continues¹: "This is the principle followed in later years by Mr. Gokhalé in his Servants of India Society; and it conforms to the precept, He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant." The Deccan Education Society naturally likewise left a large impress on Gokhalé's mind, as did the Catholic teaching orders, especially the Society of Jesus, upon whose self-sacrificing and self-effacing work, as shown in their schools and colleges, his educational Society had so largely modelled itself. When conceiving his Servants of India Society, Gokhalé deliberately set himself therefore to mould it according to what he knew of the great Jesuit Order—with the *tour de force* however of leaving out religion! Moreover it was not to be a society founded *ad hoc* for some specific activity—political, educational, economic or social; but a band of men trained to engage in any kind of activity whatever, in a special spirit of their own. Whether such members in future were to run schools or papers or legislatures or co-operative societies or slum work or what not: that was not of prime importance, but what was to be the distinctive feature, the indispensable characteristic of any such work, was to be the fact that it was to be undertaken for its own sake, as a good work which is its own end, not for the furtherance of a party or a class or a corporation or—least of all—for personal self-aggrandizement.

In the subsequent history of the Society, which in 1931 celebrated its Silver Jubilee, this ideal has largely been realized and, if each one of its members has always specialized in a definite activity, these activities on their part have been of a bewildering variety. Gokhalé himself found his lifework in politics; so did his successor, the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri, who,

¹ Sir W. Wedderburn in his *Allan Octavian Hume*, London, 1913, p. 51.

upon Gokhalé's death in 1915, became the second President of the Servants of India Society. They both figure largely in the political renascence of India, and with them other members must be associated, of all of whom the second part of this little study will treat: here I shall limit myself to some of the more striking examples of non-political "social service," upon which members of the Society have engaged and for which they have created new organizations, without for that reason relinquishing their active membership in the Servants of India Society.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The first of these members whom I would thus single out is Narayan Malhar Joshi, who, born in 1879, joined the Society in 1909 and two years later founded in Bombay the Social Service League. This was really the outcome of a *Holika Sammelan*, an attempt made in that year to supply good and healthy amusement to the lower classes of Bombay on the great *Holika* Spring festival, which hitherto had been an occasion for much rough horse-play and obscenity. The excellent results achieved made the organizers loth to disband the volunteers who had come forward to help and this led to the formation of the Social Service League of Bombay. It was founded "to collect and study social facts and discuss social problems with a view to forming public opinion on questions of social service": and its endeavour was "to secure for the masses of the people better and reasonable conditions of life and work." Within fifteen years (the last report I have before me) they had come to run 17 night-schools for 760 adults (of whom 251 were Moslems, 85 "Depressed Classes" and 5 Christians), 3 free day-schools for half-timers in the mills, 11 libraries and reading-rooms with a daily average of 200 readers, and 2 day nurseries. They had organized over a hundred cooperative societies;

they did Police Court Agent's work; gave legal advice and wrote petitions for the illiterate; they arranged fresh-air excursions for slum children and provided six gymnasias and three theatrical stages for the recreation of the working classes; they did sanitary work, gave medical relief in three dispensaries to nearly 20,000 outdoor patients *per annum*, and had started Boys' Clubs and a Scouts' Corps. It is obvious that the emergence of a modern trade-union movement could but be a question of time. In 1890 indeed a Bombay Millhands' Association had already been formed and Lokhande, the moving spirit, issued until 1898 a workmen's paper, the *Dinabandhu*, but nothing lasting had come of that. It was towards the end of the War, when the price of all necessities of life had risen to giddy heights, that the first industrial strikes broke out in Bombay; and most of the trade unions came into existence as a consequence, between 1913 and 1922. But what really provoked the birth of a proper, modern, trade-union system, was the Versailles Treaty and its creation of the International Labour Organization at Geneva. Mr. R. R. Bakhale (who as Mr. Joshi's able lieutenant has chronicled these events)¹ says: "The working classes in India did not fail to realize the importance of the right that was bestowed on them and the harm that would be done, if they did not organize themselves in order to exercise that right." Mr. N. M. Joshi seized the opportunity thereby presented and thus created in 1920 the All-India Trade Union Congress, to which within five years forty trade unions with 100,000 members had become affiliated. This Labour Movement was wisely guided by Mr. Joshi and produced excellent results after the manner of the British Trade Union Movement. Mr. Joshi fitly represented Indian Labour at the Washington International Labour Conference of 1919, and has been regularly nominated Labour Representative in the Indian Legislative Assembly since the latter's inception in 1921. Since

¹ In his *Directory of Trade Unions*, Bombay, 1925, p. 1.

1921 he is a substitute member of the Governing Body of the International Labour Office at Geneva : and the only reason why he is not a regular member is the distance at which he lives from Geneva, which makes a regular attendance of his at all meetings of the Body impossible. Even so, his influence at Geneva has been abiding and extended not only to India, but to the world. It was Mr. Joshi who insisted that the I.L.O.'s scope extends also to Colonial Labour and who thus succeeded in bringing the Genevan searchlight to play on the dark places of "native" labour. He can truly be called the father of the Indian Labour Movement and he is one of the present Indian leaders, who really is mainly concerned about the welfare of the great masses of the Indian people and who is a Democrat first and a Nationalist only a long way after that. He is therefore far from being *persona grata*, whether with the extreme Nationalists or with the Communists, who have found entry in the ranks of Indian labour organizations and wish to utilize them for their own ends. At the Annual Trade Union Congress of 1929, when these elements carried a resolution to affiliate the All-India Federation (founded by Mr. Joshi) to Moscow, Mr. Joshi and all his adherents withdrew from the packed meeting. Since then things are at sixes and sevens in the Indian labour world, but if ultimately Labour in India will be brought back to safe and sane policies, it will perhaps be once more largely the merit of this and fellow Servants of India who are actually hard at work at this task.¹

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF SERVICE

A society, very similar to the Social Service League of Bombay was started in 1914 by Mr. Hirday Nath Kunzru (Vice-Presi-

¹ For Unity Conference of July 1932 see *Servant of India* of August 11, 1932, and the I.L.O.'s *Labour Information* of August 21, 1932.

dent of the parent Society since 1927) at Allahabad and called the Seva Samiti. Its evolution has not been in the direction of industrial labour, but rather to organize social service during fairs, famines, floods, epidemics, etc.; to promote the spread of education, cooperation, sanitation and physical culture; to uplift the depressed classes, reclaim the criminal and rescue the fallen. In 1918 it started its first night-school in Allahabad, and in 1921 launched there a high-school; since 1923 it works amongst the Naiks in the Kumaon Hills, to stamp out the professional prostitution which is considered in this caste traditional. It runs two hospitals, one in Allahabad and one in Cawnpore; since 1931 it has, in response to an official invitation, started a social service department at the railway station of Allahabad. The most striking general social service it renders, not only to its Province, but to all India, is the help it gives at the religious pilgrimage centres of Northern India. For instance, at the great Kumbh Mela of 1927, when half a million pilgrims were crowded together at Hardwar, the Seva Samiti had organized a band of 1,500 volunteers who rendered the utmost assistance in regulating the traffic and the bathing of the assembled crowds. Few non-Indians have a conception of the colossal number of pilgrims who are constantly on the road in India to visit some shrine or other, and their often very insanitary methods make them not only an easy prey, but still more carriers, of every contagious disease.

In connection with this kind of work of truly national importance, carried on by the Seva Samiti, there has grown out of it a further, specialized, organization—the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts Association, the moving spirit of which is another member of the Servants of India Society, Mr. Shri Ram Bajpai. The latter had already in 1914¹ started a few troops of Boy

¹ After him Mrs. Besant, in the same year, attached *swadeshi* Boy Scout troops to the Theosophical Society's schools in Benares and Cawnpore.

Scouts in Shahjahanpur (U.P.): coming in 1918 to Allahabad to help at the Kumbh Mela, he speedily fell in with Mr. Kunzru and his colleagues of the Seva Samiti. These were the days, when Indians came to realize the nation-building value of the Scout Movement, only to find that the world-wide Baden-Powell Organization refused to allow "natives" to join it! It is thus that men like Pandit M. M. Malaviya (who is still Chief Scout and President of the National Council) set about to organize Indian Scouts outside of and parallel to the Baden-Powell Organization: by the time Sir Robert Baden-Powell came personally to India,¹ in 1921, the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts Association had firmly taken root. The world's Chief Scout was deeply impressed by what he saw and speedily raised the odious colour-bar in his own organization; he personally requested the then Minister of Education in the U.P. (Mr. C. Y. Chintamani), to send Mr. Bajpai for a year's training to Europe—which was duly done: but the Seva Samiti Organization decided to preserve its separate existence, feeling that it could thus best fulfil its aim, which is the perfect Indianization of the Boy Scouts Movement in India. At the present time it comprises some 25,000 Scouts in the United Provinces, and 2,000 more in the rest of India; it includes Moslems and Christians, as well as Hindus; and as for their *morale*, an English Scouter, visiting the Kumbh Mela in 1930, told them that "he would like his own boys in England to see how they are working, and capture some of the spirit which he saw everywhere."²

¹ At the invitation of Lord Chelmsford, in order to unite all Scout Associations in India. E. G. Montagu had given vent in no uncertain words during his stay in India to "the in these days customary folly of ours, whereby we are laying up trouble for ourselves." In his *Indian Diary*, under date December 10, 1917, he laments this exclusion in the following terms: "At the moment, when we are complaining of the divorce between the two races; at the moment, when we have a chance, by proper organization, to keep the future generations together, we are making it impossible."

² See S.S.B.S.A. *Annual Report for 1929-1930*.

It would be supererogation on my part to add to such testimonial: but I would draw attention to the fact, that the organized Boy Scouts to-day form merely a fraction of the vast number of national Volunteers, whose services are called in on a multitude of services of a social or political nature. The Indian National Congress in particular had at an early date to employ Volunteers for its great assemblies: they have come ever more prominently to the fore during the last decade and proved conclusively, not only how perfectly capable Indians are of organizing public services and of maintaining public peace, but how Indians can discharge these functions, when—e.g. at Religious Fairs—an alien Government might find itself quite helpless in coping with the situation. As is the case with all living organisms, man will do easily and naturally, when impelled from within, what they would resent and fight against, when imposed from without.

Following the lead given by the Y.M.C.A. and often working in conjunction with them, the Madras Branch of the Society has of late years laid special emphasis upon Village Revival and Rural Reconstruction work—perhaps ultimately the most important of all nation-building enterprises, since the whole future of India depends on the future of its 685,000 villages, in which, according to the 1921 Census, live 278 of its 318 million inhabitants. As typical of the kind of work to be done and perhaps the first undertaken, we may quote the "Trial in Improving a Village"¹ situate near Poona, made by Prof. D. L. Sahasrabudhe and other friends of the Servants of India as long ago as 1915, when these men for three years visited a village every Sunday and carried on such varied activities, as improving the implements and seed-corn of the villages, helping them against pests and diseases of their crops, providing secondary occupations and famine work, giving medical and educational aid, and

¹ See his article under this title, *The Servant of India* of July 14, 1927.

organizing cooperative credit and sanitation. The story he tells is not very encouraging; for "when the activities were handed over to the care of the village people, they slowed down and ultimately stopped." This opens up the whole difficult question of reintroducing the ancient system of self-government, of village *Panchayats*, which the British Raj has succeeded in uprooting, replacing it by a modern centralizing bureaucracy, which, true to the tenets of Liberalism, admits no autonomous organizations between individual and State. Nowadays there is unanimity, that this policy is pernicious: but to reconstruct is of course less easy than to pull down. At all events, it is again the Servants of India Society which for this difficult reconstruction is providing a band of invaluable, because selfless, workers.

Another development in the same direction, yet amongst a totally differing class of people—the aboriginals—was set going by Mr. Amritlal Vithaldas Thakkar, who in 1922 founded a Bhil Seva Mandal, as a consequence of what famine relief work in 1918–21 amongst these people had taught him of their crying needs. Arguing that even the "Untouchables" are better off than these shy hill tribes, seeing that they come in contact with the rest of the people through the very fact that they dwell alongside of them in the cities and villages common to all of them, whilst the Bhils and similar aboriginals of India are "without fixed abode, living always on the verge of starvation in far-off forests, shunned by and shunning contact with Hindu Society, which, where it gets a chance, exploits them"¹; this good Servant of India decided to devote himself entirely to the uplift of these sorely exploited people, amongst whom he has since lived in a more than even Franciscan simplicity. To date he has started half a dozen centres amongst them, each in charge of a worker, running a school, preaching

¹ As Mr. Thakkar says in his "Service of the Bhil" in the *Christa Seva Sangh Review*, Poona, of April 1931.

abstinence from alcohol (drunkenness is the Bhils' besetting sin!), dispensing simple medicines, and generally befriending them and protecting them against the usurer of the towns and the petty officials of the Government. "This was enough," says Mr. Thakkar, "to enrage all lower officials, specially of the Police Department, who got up a number of false cases against several of our workers and harassed the Mission in a variety of ways"; and as a consequence it was at once "looked at askance and with secret suspicion by the alien ruling class, who saw in it the seed of a great Bhil rising!" As a matter of fact the work of the Mandal is mostly educational and, after that, of social and religious reform. Its main work is the conduct of eight residential schools, where, besides the three R's, farming, spinning and weaving is taught. A farm is attached to each school and a temple of Rama, as a centre for the religious life of the *ashram*. When I visited this Seva Mandal in 1925 Mr. Thakkar had thirty-four helpers and in his schools five hundred Bhil children. Of these helpers, not a few are now themselves Bhils; all bind themselves for three years' selfless and self-denying service in these wilds. When I visited this Mission one of the workers was the son of a Bombay millionaire, who had heard this call of service and for it had willingly exchanged all his former life of ease and luxury. . . .

KARVÉ'S WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY

One more kind of work invites our attention: that done for the uplift of women. To this the present President of the Servants of India Society, Gopal Krishna Devadhar, has devoted himself single-mindedly; but before describing his work, the similar one undertaken even before him by Dhondo Keshav Karvé deserves a detailed study. Mr. Karvé does not belong directly to the Servants of India Society, but he does come from the same

milieu, and at one time was connected with Fergusson College. Born in 1858, he carries on his life-work still with the same dogged perseverance and unflagging ardour, as has characterized him all along. He started it as a teacher at a Protestant Girls' School in Bombay, where he first realized the urgent need of female education. After seven years of it, in 1891, he became a professor at Fergusson College. Having meantime become a widower, he decided to remarry, but refused to marry a girl of tender age, as Orthodox Hindu custom demanded it. He remarried in 1893, but a Brahman widow: "the remarriage of a widow," as he says himself¹ "in Poona, the stronghold of orthodoxy at that time, was not without apprehended difficulties; but everything passed off well." This event launched him on the path of Hindu widows' uplift work; characteristically he began with a niece of his, whom he taught in his own home! He likewise revived and became the Secretary of the Widow Marriage Association (1893), of which G. G. Agarkar and Ramkrishna G. Bhandarkar at one time were President; and he also started a boarding-school for the children of remarried couples—again in his own tiny house, with his wife and himself constituting the entire staff! As regards the Widow Marriage Association, Mr. Karvé gave up its Secretaryship in 1900, but it continues to exist to this day, though public opinion has so vastly changed in the meantime, that the problem of the Brahman widow is well on the way to disappearance. At the time things were far otherwise. In 1899 Mr. Karvé opened a Hindu widows' home in Poona city, but within a year he found it prudent to shift it to a garden situated in a lonely spot at Higne Budruk, some ten miles from the city, in a stone and mud hut costing Rs. 500, which, as a much venerated relic, is preserved to this day within the precincts of what has since become an imposing settlement. The aim of the Home was² to give high-caste widows

¹ In his *My Twenty Years in the Cause of Indian Women*, Poona, 2nd ed., 1915, p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 24.

an interest in life, by training them to become self-supporting as teachers, midwives or nurses. The education given there attracted soon other girls, not widows themselves, but relatives of widows in the Home; and so a further development became necessary—the establishment, in 1907, of a girls' school, the Mahila Vidyalaya, which was to be a boarding-school for non-widow students, to prepare them “not for an examination, but to be good wives, good mothers and good neighbours,”¹ and incidentally to encourage a later marriage age for girls. As will be seen, Mr. Karvé was anxious to have a syllabus of his own, specially suited to women's needs, and he was by no means content to duplicate merely the type of Governmental girls' school. Moreover he was a strong believer in the Indian vernaculars as media for all instruction—another point on which he differed from the official educational policy of the time. What wonder, then, that he conceived the idea of crowning his life-work by creating an Indian Women's University? With his usual enthusiasm and energy Mr. Karvé carried out his scheme in 1916—with Sir R. G. Bhandarkar as first Chancellor of the University and four students to make a beginning with the University's first college. The Vidyalaya (and all other schools which had clustered around the Home or were later on to do so), were affiliated to this Women's University, which thus has become the first “free” university in India—“free” in the sense of being absolutely independent of Government and receiving no grant whatever from it. In 1920 a Bombay millionaire endowed the University, which was shifted from Hingne to Yerandavne, on the outskirts of Poona, and to-day is housed there in palatial buildings. By 1931 twenty-four institutions, mainly in Gujerat and Maharashtra—arts colleges, training colleges, high and middle schools—had become affiliated to the University; over 2,500 girls were reading in its middle and high schools; and 125 were re-

¹ *My Twenty Years in the Cause of Indian Women*, p. 32.

ceiving higher education in the colleges conducted under its auspices.

Admirable as all this is, far more admirable still—and of still higher interest for our purpose—is the manner in which Mr. Karvé has staffed these multitudinous institutions. From the very first, the ideal before him was “to create an order of Hindu Sisters of Charity and Mercy”¹ and with this idea in his mind he formally constituted himself in 1910 with fifteen of his co-workers—of whom four were men and eleven women—the Nishkama Karma Math (“the monastery of disinterested work”), whose members would work for the cause and not for money; men and women to whom “that cause is a spiritual mission,” who will regard “service of mankind as acceptable to God and as in itself a way to spiritual salvation.” “The sole object of this Math,” continues Mr. Karvé, “is to render what help it can in the service of womankind. Conviction of the usefulness of such service is our faith. The little we may be able to do is the offering we place upon the altar. Self-abnegation and poverty are the test of our faith and a shield against disappointments and reverses.”

Who can read these lines without having his heart stirred, what Catholic especially can read them, without being profoundly touched by the deep religious fervour, which shines through it all, and by the pathos of this groping, as in semi-darkness, after the Light which enlighteneth every man, but which to them as yet remains “The Unknown God”? Here we have a self-revelation of the heart of these Hindu Reformers, who certainly were largely inspired by their patriotism and by humanitarian and merely philanthropic ideals. But above and beyond all, there is undoubtedly the religious element, the hunger and thirst after righteousness, the willingness to suffer persecution for justice’ sake, the doing of things in accordance with and on account of the designs of God, Who loves mercy

¹ *My Twenty Years in the Cause of Indian Women*, p. 33.

and truth and justice—all this is there, confused perhaps, certainly not clear-cut in terms of Catholic theology: but it is there, unmistakably, and I, who have known these men bear witness to it.

That religious element—I would even go as far as maintaining—exists even in those men who have deliberately shed all religious belief and who have become atheists: for this class is also met with amongst these Indian Reformers, some of whom are ardent Rationalists, or, to use a technical term which is more accurate, Naturalists. How explain this strange phenomenon? Lord Balfour, it seems to me, has admirably put it in his *Foundations of Belief*,¹ where he speaks of “those persons who claim to show by their example that naturalism is practically consistent with the maintenance of ethical ideals.” He explains their existence by analogy with a parasitic plant living upon another—like orchids upon a giant of the primeval forest. “Their spiritual life,” says he, “is parasitic: it is sheltered by convictions which belong, not to them, but to the society of which they form a part”—in this case that of Hindu society, which in the last resort is based upon Natural Religion; and of the Christian society, the “works” of which these men accept, whilst rejecting its “faith.” Thus their spiritual life—to continue in Lord Balfour’s words—“is nourished by processes in which they take no share: and when those convictions decay, and those processes come to an end, the alien life which they have maintained can scarce be expected to outlast them.”

THE SEVA SADAN

Turning now to the somewhat similar work called into being by Mr. G. K. Devadhar, this centres round one of the most important and beneficial organizations in India for the uplift

¹ P. 83.

of women of all castes and classes—the Poona Seva Sadan. The origin of this institution Mr. Devadhar himself describes¹ thus: “While engaged in famine relief in the United Provinces, my conviction grew that India needed just as much an army of trained women workers in various fields of national advance, as men. . . . On my return to Poona I called a dozen small meetings of friends, both ladies and gentlemen, who would feel interested in this idea and these meetings resulted in a resolve to undertake the education and training of half a dozen poor widows as social workers.” This work was started in the house of Mrs. Ramabai Ranadé, the widow of the great reformer, and she remained until her death in 1924 President of the new Society which was definitely launched in 1909—with “life-workers” and a staff of other devoted workers, much after the style of the other societies already referred to by me. To Mr. Devadhar belongs the great merit of having broken down the prejudice in Orthodox Hindu circles against what seemed the preposterous idea of respectable women and girls serving in hospitals as nurses indiscriminately men and women of all classes and castes. He sent in 1911 two young ladies to the great hospital in Poona for training and from this small start, made with the greatest diffidence and difficulty, has sprung the magnificent result to-day: the breaking down of age-long prejudice, the opening up of new avenues of usefulness to the once useless Hindu widow, the relief of suffering and bruised humanity. In 1928 the Society, in Poona alone, maintained a hostel for 38 probationer nurses, another hostel for 25 junior medical women students and a third one for 24 senior students. In addition at the Seva Sadan itself women were trained in public health work and an antenatal clinic and baby welfare centre were opened there. Besides there is the training, both literary and industrial, given to adults and children; a training college practising school, workroom, school for social workers,

¹ In *Young India* of March 4, 1926.

etc.—and what is more, branches of the institution have been opened in a dozen other towns, including Bombay, Madras and Nagpur. Altogether, the activities of the Society are now extended to about 1,500 women and girls—and as all their maintenance has to be met by public charity, one can imagine the resourcefulness, energy and organizing talent of a man like Mr. G. K. Devadhar. What is more; what revolution in Hindu thought must have been effected, to make such generous giving and sustained charity possible! Obviously similar and even far more extensive works of charity have been undertaken by the Christian Missions in India: but in their case, Hindu society has only been touched from the outside; it has accepted, but not given; the ever-present fear of conversion has never made it possible for Hindus to give themselves *sans arrière pensée* or to enter body and soul into any action which is under the auspices of Christian missionaries. The Seva Sadan itself is the best proof of this fact: for it was really the taking up of a work inaugurated by a Christian lady, Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati, who, born in 1858 and become an Anglican in 1883, had started a Sharada Sadan in 1889 as a home for widows in Bombay and later on in Poona; an institution which broke up completely in 1893, owing to the fact, that one or two of the inmates had embraced Christianity! Pandita Ramabai thereafter was side-tracked in a great Protestant women's refuge, which, good as was the work it did, could never exercise any direct influence on Hindu society as such. To leaven the latter a Devadhar, a Karvé, a Gokhalé, a Ranadé are needed: the missionaries have set up a standard and given an example; they have emitted great, but invisible beacons of spiritual power which have set going in distant and often by them unknown receivers a music which their own ears do not hear, but which, for all that, is very real—and divine.

The women's movement in India, especially under the stimulus of the political upheaval of the last three years, has

succeeded with a swiftness and to a degree that would have seemed fantastic even a few years earlier. Women have come out of their *purdah* and have claimed in the market-place their citizens' rights; the "non-violent non-cooperation" revolution has found in them the most zealous picketters of drink and foreign cloth shops, the most fearless passive resisters of the armed forces of Government, the most uncompromising and intransigent fighters for India's independence, the most persuasive and forceful agitators in the popular cause. The Women's Movement, like all other currents of social reform, has in the end flowed into the political life of the country: and it is just because of that, that the political movement of India is an essential, nay the most essential part of that Renaissance which, starting with Ram Mohan Roy, has issued in Mahatma Gandhi to-day.

MAHATMA GANDHI

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, born in 1869 at Porbandar (Kathiawad), was the son of a Hindu of the merchant caste, who was the local Prince's Secretary of State. He was married in 1882; left for England in 1887 and was called to the Bar in London in 1891. Returned to India in the same year, he left again in 1893 for South Africa in connection with some legal business, but remained there until 1914, save for two short sojourns in India in 1896 and 1901. The twenty years, which he thus spent, between the age of twenty-four and forty-five, amongst his countrymen in South Africa constitute a life-work, of which any man might be proud. It earned him from no less a man than Gokhalé, who went on an official mission to South Africa in 1912, the eulogy that "the Indian cause in South Africa has really been built up by Mr. Gandhi" and that "without self and without stain, he has fought a great fight for India, for which India owes him an immense debt of

gratitude." It would be somewhat of a digression to describe in detail the stubborn struggle upon which he engaged there, in order to obtain citizens' rights for the despised members of a "coolie nation." The fierce race prejudice to the full blast of which he also was personally exposed never soured him, but only served to temper him like a blade of steel. It developed his method of being true to the Light, as far as he saw it, of meeting injustice by passive resistance, the doing of wrong by the suffering of wrong, and hatred by love. By his work for the Indians of South Africa he unrolled the whole question of the status and treatment of Indians abroad, he was instrumental in getting indentured labour abolished, and for the Indian in the Union of South Africa he secured a position, which, though not satisfactory, was at least tolerable: and if the gentlemen's agreement of 1914 between Mr. Gandhi and General Smuts was never implemented, it was not because "the coolie lawyer" was no gentleman.

It is in Africa, then, that Mr. Gandhi evolved the philosophy and technique of Satyagraha: and without understanding it, one certainly will never understand him. Satyagraha is a Sanskrit term, coined by him, which means "holding on to Truth." *Agraha* is the *contrectatio* (to use a legal term), the possessive grasp of a thing, whereby it becomes part of oneself; it is the holding on, like grim death,¹ against all hostile

¹ In saying this I have in mind that dreadful scene, one of Mr. Gandhi's first experiences in Africa, when he was travelling by coach to Pretoria. It was on the stage between Charlestown and Standerton; Gandhiji had been told to sit outside on the box-seat, but at Praardekop a white man wanted to smoke and sit there, and so told the "coolie" to sit on the footboard. He refused to budge. "The man came for me and began heavily to box my ears. He seized me by the arm and tried to drag me down. I clung to the brass rails of the coachbox and was determined to keep my hold even at the risk of breaking my wrist-bones. The passengers were witnessing the scene—the man swearing at me, dragging and belabouring me, and I remaining still. He was strong and I was weak." (*My Experiments with Truth*, by M. K. Gandhi, Ahmedabad, 1927, Vol. I, p. 263.)

attempts at making one loosen one's grip. *Satya* is Truth, in the sense of Reality, of that which is Right and Just, of that on which one is prepared to stake one's life; hence Truthfulness. The whole concept of Satyagraha is only strange to a neo-pagan world, which looks upon religion as consisting of some familiar, but meaningless and in any case irrelevant, phrases and shibboleths. It is perfectly obvious to anybody, who lives a life of deliberate and constant dependence upon God; sure enough such a one may lack the heroic degree of virtue which gladly suffers even death rather than being untrue to Him Who is Truth, and he may thus feel incapable of himself rising to the moral height of a confessor or martyr—but he will have not the least difficulty in understanding such attitude of mind nor hesitate to pay it its full due of admiration and—as far as he can—imitation. A difficulty in the modern world arises of course even for genuinely religious people out of the fact, that life in general has been to such a degree organized apart from God, that to refer all one's activities to God, not only those of a strictly religious or humanitarian nature, but even those touching one's profession and politics, has become a thing of such surpassing strangeness, as to be considered as almost bordering on religious mania. To such a world Mr. Gandhi naturally is a puzzle, which in turn they ridicule and curse. A second difficulty however lies in Mr. Gandhi himself, and this gives at times a handle to those who see in him nothing but a fanatic or a faddist. This difficulty arises out of the fact that Mr. Gandhi is guided solely by his "Inner Light"—in other words, that he can only go by the private judgment of a conscience, which may be insufficiently informed; that he lacks in matters of faith and morals the objective norm and criterion of Truth, which the Catholic possesses in the *magisterium* of a Church divinely founded for that purpose; and that he has never known the discipline of having to obey an external authority, even when

the latter decides only on the secondary question of opportuneness.

That this difficulty is a very real one, nobody, observing objectively the Mahatma's activities, can deny. In May 1930—to take a recent example—the Satyagraha Campaign, then in full swing about the common right (?) of making salt, took the turn of making raids on the Government salt depots at Wadala, Dharasana and elsewhere. Even so great an admirer of the Mahatma, as the Rev. Verrier Elwin is constrained to admit that “it is very difficult to understand how such raids can be reconciled with the strict creed of non-violence”¹—yet because Mr. Gandhi did not find anything inconsistent in them, because *he* “never associated them with violence,” and thought of them merely as “adventures in suffering”: therefore such raids *are* “non-violent,” and his followers accept them as such! But self-deception and sophistry are ever inseparable from Subjectivism. Mr. Gandhi's sayings and writings abound in examples: the most grotesque being those concerning two great hobby-horses of his—“food-reform” and “nature-cure,” on which, one regretfully finds, he often descends to the levels of that well-known species, the health-bore.²

But Subjectivism limits Mr. Gandhi also in another direction. European admirers of his are apt to take his Satyagraha for a universal principle, to be applied to every wrong in the world. But such is not Mr. Gandhi's attitude. He spent half a life-

¹ P. 66 of *The Dawn of Indian Freedom*, by J. C. Winslow and V. Elwin, London, 1931. The authors are Anglican *sannyasis*, who have founded the Anglican Indian Order of the Christa Seva Sangh in Poona.

² Mrs. M. G. Polak, who with her husband for so many years shared the Gandhi household in South Africa, has in her little book (*Mr. Gandhi: The Man*, London, 1931) given some very valuable pen-sketches of this side of Mr. Gandhi's character: cf. on p. 107 the everlasting food conversation about potato parings and cabbage water. For Mr. Gandhi's self-deceiving proclivities see the *Lila* affair, pp. 142 ff.

time in Africa, battling for Indian rights: yet the far more glaring and still less excusable disabilities, under which the Africans suffer in their own country, have never moved Mr. Gandhi to interest himself in their cruel wrongs, let alone preach a Satyagrahi's war for their removal. In India itself some of his own staunchest followers may allege¹ the existence of a government by murder, rape and theft, without Mr. Gandhi as much as lifting his little finger against the Indian Prince arraigned. Mr. Gandhi is far too much of a shrewd politician to wish to dissipate his forces as a world-reformer, who would put right all things and a few more besides. He discriminates between seasons and opportunities for Satyagraha: yet Satyagraha is, according to him, not a form of political tactics, but the outcome of a categorical imperative! The contradiction is obvious: to resolve it, he must resort to Subjectivism *in excelsis*—i.e. he must deceive himself and others into the belief that, when he says so, a wrong becomes intolerable and nothing but resistance to death is then permissible to any person with the rudiments of morality in him; but that, as long as he does not say so, the alleged wrong has simply not yet arisen. At one moment Mr. Gandhi outdoes the most extreme rigorist in his skill for straining gnats; at the next he leaves the laxest latitudinarian speechless at the ease with which he swallows whole camels: with the result that a bewildered onlooker is left to square, as best he may, the appearance of personal saintliness with that of political chicanery. Psychological analysis, as a matter of fact, will conclude that in his sub-consciousness Mr. Gandhi places really the advantages of his own country first, though consciously he is no doubt serenely convinced that he always puts Truth first: so that, in the last resort, it all merely comes to this, that Satyagraha, under the guise of a general principle, is

¹ Cf. *Indictment of Patiala* by the Indian States' Peoples' Conference. Bombay, 1930.

a specifically Gandhian method, to be employed in specifically Gandhian wars!

On the other hand, of course, it would be quite a mistake to see in Satyagraha only a species of fanatical obstinacy, the expression of impotent rage, the explosive sullenness of "repressed" anger. Gandhiji before the psycho-analysts knew, that anger must not be "repressed," but "sublimated." Hence he invariably couples with Satyagraha another term—*Ahimsa*, literally "harmlessness," a term which with him, however, has taken a positive meaning, "love." He fully explains himself: the difference he sees between Passive Resistance and Satyagraha: "Among the English people, whenever a small minority did not approve of some obnoxious piece of legislation, instead of rising in rebellion, they took the passive, or milder, step of not submitting to the law, and inviting the penalties of such non-submission upon their heads. When the British Parliament passed the Education Act, the Nonconformists offered passive resistance under the leadership of Dr. Clifford. The great movement of the English women for the vote was also known as passive resistance—the weapon of the weak or the voteless. Dr. Clifford and his friends were in a minority in Parliament. The suffragists had no franchise rights; they were weak in numbers as well as in physical force; but they did not eschew the use of physical force. Some suffragists fired buildings, and even assaulted men. But I can definitely assert that in planning the Indian movement there never was the slightest thought given to the possibility or otherwise of offering armed resistance. Brute force had absolutely no place in the Indian movement in any circumstance; the Satyagrahis never were to use physical force, even though there were occasions, when they might have been able to use it effectively." For him Satyagraha is based on "soul-force,"

¹ In *Satyagraha in South Africa*. Transl. from the Gujarati by V. S. Desai, Madras, 1928, pp. 175 ff.

and this he takes to be a contradiction of "brute force"; it is resorted to, because soul-force is believed to be stronger than brute force. Satyagrahis therefore do not consider themselves weak, as do passive resisters, but strong; and to have recourse to physical force would be to a true Satyagrahi an admission of weakness. Perhaps it is unnecessary for me here to observe that to a Catholic this is the fallacy of philosophical Idealism, which considers only Ideas to be real, and the heresy of Manichaeism, which deems matter not only unreal, but evil; whilst in Catholic teaching man is a being normally endowed both with soul-force and with brute force, the exercise of both of which is natural to him and legitimate, but which must be exercised in such a manner that soul-force directs, while brute force only carries out the directions, towards a good end. But just because the end must be good, the Catholic fully agrees with Mr. Gandhi's Satyagrahi, that he must love his enemy. "In passive resistance," he tells us, "there is no scope for love; on the other hand not only has hatred no place in Satyagraha, but is a positive breach of its ruling principle. In passive resistance there is always present an idea of harassing the other party, and there is a simultaneous readiness to undergo any hardships entailed upon us by such activity; while in Satyagraha there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent. Satyagraha postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's own person." There are not, he concludes, many cases in history of what he calls Satyagraha, as opposed to passive resistance. "One of these is that of the Dukhobors of Russia, cited by Tolstoy." Again, "the phrase passive resistance was not employed to denote the patient suffering of oppression by thousands of devout Christians in the early days of Christianity; I would therefore class them as Satyagrahis. Jesus Christ indeed has been acclaimed as the Prince of passive resisters, but, I submit, in that case passive resistance must mean Satyagraha and Satyagraha alone."

At this point it will be well to define Mr. Gandhi's attitude to Christianity. A great friend of his, the Rev. J. J. Doke,¹ recounts him saying that "it was the New Testament which really awakened me (i.e. Mr. Gandhi) to the rightness and value of passive resistance. The Bhagavad Gita deepened the impression, and Tolstoy's *Kingdom of Heaven Within You* gave it permanent form." D. V. Athalye² similarly narrates how "the Sermon on the Mount became his favourite" and how the Beatitudes "went throbbing in his brain for days and days together, and brought him singular peace and exaltation. But more than that: it was the personality of the Christ that had such a fascination for him. Neither Buddha nor Mahomet, nor any of the saints he had read of had *died* for the cause." Mrs. Polak³ even records that Mr. Gandhi once seriously thought of embracing the Christian faith. "The gentle figure of Christ" seemed to him a "beautiful example of the perfect man." "I studied your Scriptures," he told Mrs. Polak, "and earnestly thought about them. I was tremendously attracted to Christianity; but eventually I came to the conclusion that there was nothing really in your Scriptures that we had not got in ours, and that to be a good Hindu also meant that I would be a good Christian." And he clinches the point by quoting the Hindu dogma: "If a man reaches the heart of his own religion, he has reached the heart of the others too. There is only one God, but there are many paths to Him."

Thus Mr. Gandhi has from infancy remained steadfast in "his own religion," Vaishnavism; a devout Hindu *bhakti milieu* he was born into, and in it he resolved to remain. To those Christians, who find that hard to understand, I would point out that he has never known sacramental Christianity of

¹ A Baptist minister in Johannesburg and an Indian himself. See his *M. K. Gandhi: an Indian Patriot in South Africa*, 1909, p. 84.

² *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, Poona, 1923, p. 144.

³ Loc. cit., p. 40.

any sort. All he knows of Christianity came to him from Protestant sectarians: Catholicism he had looked at from afar—through their eyes. Is it not really quite logical for him under such circumstances to conclude that the mere colouring of one's *bhakta* by Christian rather than Vaishnavite concepts is unessential? One does not mean it unkindly, but to a Catholic a Christianity without the Catholic Church and without that Church's Sacraments really does seem to hold out no reason why a modern Hindu should seek baptism.

In London Mr. Gandhi was thrown into the company of people who often held, what the Army slang calls, "fancy beliefs": it certainly is quite an irony of fate that it was in London that he first took to the Bhagavad Gita—prompted thereto by the Theosophists. Again, Liberal Jainism influenced him; especially in the person of Kavi Rajachandra († 1901), a jeweller and *hatha-yogi*,¹ who kept faithfully the ideal of asceticism in the midst of worldly possessions. Jainism gave him the ideal of virtue under the fivefold aspect of (1) *ahimsa* (non-killing), (2) *satya* (truthfulness), (3) *brahmacharya* (continence), (4) *asteya* (non-coveting), (5) *aparigraha* (poverty).

"In Gandhi's life," says Athalye,² "no trace is discovered of Mazzini, nor of Vivekananda, nor Ramatirtha. Thoreau, but not Emerson, influenced him—Thoreau who had carried the worship of conscience to the limit of seeking imprisonment for refusal to pay a trifling tax." Ruskin is another writer whose ideas found in Gandhiji's soul a ready soul wherein to grow. So much was he stirred by Ruskin's *Unto this Last*, that he founded his first *ashram*³ (monastic establishment) as a direct and immediate consequence of it. "But of all men who

¹ "Physical culture" ascetic.

² Loc. cit., pp. 145-148.

³ Phoenix Settlement, fourteen miles from Durban, founded in 1904. He also translated *Unto this Last* into Gujarati under the title *Sarvodaya* (The Welfare of All).

influenced him," says Athalye, "Tolstoy stands at the top. Gandhiji's second *ashram* he significantly called Tolstoy Farm,¹ The year before (1909) he had written his first letter to Tolstoy, who had replied: "May God aid our dear fellow-fighters of the Transvaal," and had asked Gandhi to read his *Letter to a Hindu*. In April 1910 Gandhi wrote once more, sending him a copy of his *Hind Swaraj*—the pamphlet which the Government of India prohibited—and signed himself "Your humble disciple." Markovitch, from whose book² I have taken these details, proves how Gandhi has applied the whole Tolstoyan theory: I. In his private life by (1) his asceticism, (2) his poverty, (3) his manual labour, (4) his assistance of the poor; II. In his political life of (1) passive resistance, and (2) non-violence. The same author shows too how both Tolstoy and Gandhi are on the alert against the temptations which Government employs in order to hypnotize (through its schools!), bribe and intimidate the people into a "slave mentality."

Asceticism plays such a large part in all the activities of Gandhiji, because his quest is above all a religious one, and because he realizes that only the pure in heart can see God. To conquer others, one must first conquer oneself, he soon found; and the key to self-conquest he saw in chastity; whilst to control passion he controlled the palate. Hence a simplicity of habits, tantamount to renunciation, is indispensable; and *asteya* ("non-thieving" literally) means to him the non-possession of more property than is absolutely required for the moment. The vow of *Samatva*³ he exacts at his *ashram* is not only directed against "untouchability," but against the keeping of any servants. A Satyagrahi must do all the most menial work himself; he must be a servant of others: one

¹ Founded in May 1910, twenty-one miles from Johannesburg.

² Milan I. Markovitch, *Tolstoi et Gandhi*, Paris, 1928, p. 20.

³ From *samata*—equality.

notes, how here Gandhiji's and Gokhalé's ideas¹ as Servants of India meet. But whilst Gokhalé deliberately chose political work, Mr. Gandhi never did; it "just growed," like Topsy. Not one of the political "scrapes" into which he has fallen was in any way desired by him; they are incidents in a *Dharma Yuddha*² "which comes unsought; and a man of religion is ever ready for it. A struggle which has to be previously planned is not a righteous struggle. A *Dharma Yuddha* can be waged only in the name of God, and it is only when the Satyagrahi feels quite helpless that God comes to the rescue—when one feels oneself humbler than the very dust under one's feet." He is therefore not (consciously) a Nationalist either; on the contrary he has ever had a large number of European friends, and is surrounded by them even yet. He began life, in fact, by believing that "British rule was on the whole beneficial to the ruled. The colour prejudice I saw in South Africa was, I thought, quite contrary to British traditions, and I believed that it was only temporary and local. I therefore vied with Englishmen in loyalty to the Throne."³ Out of that genuine loyalty, which he felt as an obligation, not as something for which he deserved rewards, he organized in 1899 an Indian Volunteer Ambulance Corps during the Boer War. Again, in 1906 he raised a stretcher-bearer party during the Zulu Revolt. For both he received medals and was mentioned in despatches. On his return to India, Lord Hardinge presented him at the 1915 New Year Honours with the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal, for the work he had done for Indians in South Africa; at the War Conference in Delhi in 1918 he agreed to raise a corps in Kheda, which was not needed eventually, as the War was ending.

¹ "All pleasures and possessions pale into nothingness before service which is rendered in a spirit of joy." (*Experiments with Truth*, I, p. 407.)

² "War of Morality"—see *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 6.

³ *Experiments with Truth*, I, p. 401.

Such is the man, who, to use his own words at his trial in 1922, "from a staunch loyalist and cooperator became an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-cooperator."¹ How such a change was possible we shall consider in its proper place, which is in the section of this book dealing with the political evolution. Here I would only invite attention to the singular fact that Ram Mohan Roy, the first, and Mohandas Gandhi, the last of a long line of Reformers, each in himself comprises all the reform movement—religious, social, economic, political—in only one or the other of which others have specialized. It is as if the white light emitted by Ram Mohan had been broken up into a rainbow of colours by the multitude of different great personalities, whom we have been able to contemplate, however cursorily, in this section; and as if all these refracted rays were, at the century's close, brought together again through the focus of Gandhiji's wonderful personality which once more is casting a beam of dazzling white light ahead. An ascetic and a politician, he combines in himself all the Modern Indian Reform Movements—he fights untouchability, drunkenness and pauperism; he starts a trade union movement, and a National University; a devout Vaishnavite, he gives yet a new depth and meaning to *ahimsa* and *satya*; a social reformer and social worker, he practises what he preaches; the greatest political leader of India, he founds an order of political *sannyasis* and creates an army of volunteers. He is unique in his many-sided power of synthesis: but this uniqueness cannot be understood, unless he is seen as the descendant of a long line of illustrious spiritual forbears.

Having tried to understand these men and the inwardness of their cause, we shall now turn to India's political evolution of which Mahatma Gandhi is at once the principal product and the chief actor.

¹ *The Historic Trial of Mahatma Gandhi*, Karachi, 1922, p. 25.

CHAPTER II

THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT: FIRST PERIOD (1833-1914)

VICTORIAN ENGLAND'S LIBERAL STATESMANSHIP

AT the outset of a study of India's political renaissance since Ram Mohan Roy's death, it is essential to realize the mental outlook and attitude of the Ruling Power during that period: for it is only thus that we shall understand India's ready assimilation of it in response to it. It is the coming into force of the Reform Bill in that same year (1833) which has really settled England's political ideals; it is by the triumph of that parliamentary reform that the principle of government which St. Thomas Aquinas¹ calls the *principatus civilis seu politicus* has definitely superseded that other form, which he terms *principatus dominativus*—and this triumph of politics over domineering, of democracy over autocracy, has remained the guiding star of England's history ever since. And though that very history of course is made up of subsequent actions and reactions between two sets of forces, neither of which has at any time completely disappeared, it is the real glory and greatness of England that on the whole she has remained true to her ideals, however little other nations have adopted them, and that to this very day the idea of imperialist domination and exploitation, of autocratic government imposed from without, is felt to be an idea opposed to all the best traditions of the race and something essentially "un-English."

¹ "Dominative Government" St. Thomas defines as that of a lord over his serfs; whilst "Political Government" is exercised over men free and the equals of those who govern them. A luminous exposition of St. Thomas's teaching on the subject is given by Marcel Demongeot in his *Le meilleur régime politique selon St. Thomas*, Paris, 1928, p. 43.

"He inspired Oriental despotism with the Spirit of Britain and Freedom" are the proud words composed by Macaulay and inscribed upon the pedestal of Bentinck's statue in Calcutta: and what is more, they are true. 1833 is not only the year of the Reform Act; it is also that of the final abolition of slavery, of the first Factory Law, of the first State grant to education. These were first beginnings, but they were being followed up. In 1846 the Corn Laws were repealed; three years later, the Navigation Laws were swept away. With them went the whole system of preferential tariffs—Free Trade triumphed, and with it the whole underlying doctrine of Freedom as the cure of all ills. If, after almost a hundred years, we to-day recognize that there are limits to this a little over-simplified faith and that the optimism it engendered is a trifle too facile, we would yet do well to acknowledge, without reserve, that it is the dominance of this liberal statesmanship, in domestic, in Imperial, and in foreign affairs, which has lifted England to the place of pre-eminence in the world, which she has occupied since—or at least until the end of the War; and that Freedom remains as true an ideal and as practical a policy now as then, notwithstanding the extreme of a *laissez-faire* of smug complacency and cold egoism, to which an unbridled Liberalism has often seemed to lead it.

It was Lord Durham's Report in 1839 which, advocating Responsible Government in Canada, saved what remained of British America for the Empire, and it was Cobden who, when the adoption of that policy hung in the balance, asked his Tory opponents: "Do you intend to hold your Colonies by the sword, by armies, and ships-of-war? *That is not a permanent hold on them.* I want to retain them by their affections." True to this policy, the Colonial Office (in the words of one who for long was a Permanent Under-Secretary there)¹

¹ Sir F. Rogers, quoted by C. S. S. Higham in his *History of the British Empire*, Longmans, 1931, 4th ed., p. 136.

conceived its function to consist "in securing that our connection, while it lasts, shall be as profitable to both parties, and our separation, when it comes, as amicable as possible." Responsible Government was not defined in a niggardly spirit. When the Canadian Parliament in 1849 passed the Rebellion Losses Bill, which the furious Loyalists stigmatized as subsidizing the rebels of the 1837 Revolt, Lord Durham's son-in-law, Lord Elgin, as Governor-General of Canada, gave it the royal assent, because the Canadian Parliament had passed the Act. More completely still was a colony's freedom vindicated when, in 1859, Canada introduced a Customs tariff and successfully maintained her fiscal autonomy against a violently free-trade mother country by declaring that they "could not waive nor diminish the right of the people of Canada to decide for themselves both as to the mode and extent to which taxation shall be imposed."

Elsewhere England pursued the same policy. In Australia malcontent settlers in New South Wales were in 1850 simply told to form an independent colony, Victoria, and to draft whichever constitution they pleased, which latter would in due course be ratified by the Home Government. Similarly in Africa representative government was introduced in 1854, when the first Parliament met in Cape Town, and a strict policy of non-intervention in affairs concerning the hinterland was insisted upon. It was the discovery of the Kimberley Diamond Fields in 1869-70 and the triumph of the Bismarckian blood-and-iron policy at Versailles which, each in its own way, have, it seems to me, combined to usher in a new epoch of Imperialism and "dominative" mentality, and have caused such a grave set-back to mid-Victorian Liberalism as to leave us with a legacy of which we have not even yet quite rid ourselves. In 1863 England could still, with perfect goodwill and the best of grace on her part, let the people of a colonial possession of hers like the Ionian Islands exchange their

allegiance to the British Crown for that to the Hellenic Kingdom, to which they belonged by every tie except the political one: and the distance we have travelled (retrogressively) in the intervening half-century cannot, I think, be better measured than by the *non possumus* attitude which a similar demand of the people of Cyprus is meeting with in London to-day.

At all events, in the early and mid-Victorian periods England pursued this liberal statesmanship—and pursued it just as much in respect of India, as in other respects. Already in 1813 Parliament, in reviewing and re-enacting the charter of the East India Company, had laid it down that “it is the duty of this country to promote the interest and happiness of the native inhabitants of the British Dominions in India,” and when in 1833 a fresh Act was passed and the East India Company was deprived of all its trading powers and turned simply into a public corporation for the government of India, Parliament enacted the famous regulation “that no native of the said Territories nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or any employment under the said Government”; the Parliamentary Committee declaring it in fact to be “an indisputable principle that the interests of the native subjects are to be consulted in preference to those of Europeans, whenever the two come in competition.” By the same Act the Company was henceforth enabled to pass legislation: and from 1833 the British Power in India promoted no longer Regulations, but Acts. A Law Member was therefore added to the Governor-General’s Council—and it is important to remember that from this seed of a Law Member have sprung by subsequent modification and enlargement all the legislative, representative and responsible powers which India actually possesses.

The first Law Member, moreover, was none other than

Mr. Thomas Macaulay, the future Lord Macaulay (1800-1859), whose whole outlook and policy cannot be better summed up than in his own words.¹ To his mind, "it would be far better for us that the people of India were well governed and independent of us, than ill-governed and subject to us; that they were ruled by their own Kings and wearing our broadcloth and working with our cutlery, than that they were performing their salaams to English Collectors and English Magistrates, but were too ignorant to value or too poor to buy English manufactures. That would indeed be a doting wisdom which would keep a hundred millions of men from being our customers in order that they might continue to be our slaves." This passage to be sure is not infused with high moral principle: but it is all the more striking as bringing home to us the mentality of the man-in-the-street of that time, whom Macaulay addressed. And let us not forget that Macaulay's despatch and his education policy did not drop from the skies, but had been long prepared by such men as Sir Thomas Munro (who died as Governor of Madras in 1827), who wrote to Canning that "our present system of Government, by excluding all natives from power and trust and emolument, is much more efficacious in depressing, than all our laws and school books can do in elevating their character. We are working against our own designs, while we work at the improvement of the character of a people, keeping them at the same time in the lowest state of dependence on foreign rulers, to which they can be reduced by conquest."²

Above all, the growing pressure of missionary bodies in this

¹ Uttered in 1831; his sojourn in India falls into the years 1834-38. I quote from p. 320 of *The Indian National Congress* (Madras, 1911), an account of the first twenty-six years of the Congress, compiled by Mr. (now the Rt. Hon.) V. S. Sastri. I shall often have recourse to this volume and shall quote it as *Congress*.

² Quoted from p. 63 of Edward Thompson's excellent little *History of India* in Benn's Sixpenny Library.

direction of education must be borne in mind. Especially the Scottish Kirk Missions, with their traditional Scottish devotion to education, were foremost in this respect: the colleges founded by Dr. Alexander Duff (1806-1878) in Calcutta and Dr. John Wilson (1804-1875) in Bombay, the former in 1830, the latter in 1835, linked inevitably the knowledge of English with the knowledge of Christianity. Both had a decisive influence upon the ultimate policy of Macaulay's, whereby English was substituted for Persian as the official language of the Government, and whereby English likewise became the medium of all higher education, an education moreover which was uncompromisingly English both in form and matter. With Macaulay his brother-in-law, Charles Edward Trevelyan (1807-1886), took a prominent part in shaping the new educational policy and defending it against the Orientalists: but, if the triumph of these ideas became inevitable, it was not least, because the whole body of Hindu Reformers espoused them, knowing full well that the new idea of Freedom, as found in all English writings, was as yet unrepresented in Oriental literature.

Not as if there had been no system of education whatever, prior to the advent of the English in India. The very opposite is the true fact. "The English found in India a widespread system of elementary and higher education, of which the former was mainly practical, the latter mainly literary, philosophical and religious," says F. W. Thomas in his *History and Prospects of British Education in India*.¹ In fact, when the English began to make educational efforts, they did so, because they were, like Sir Thomas Munro, "distressed at the rapid decay of literature and the arts": yet even when this Governor of Madras in consequence caused an investigation to be made in 1821, it was found that in a total population of 12,850,941 the number of boys actually attending school still amounted to 184,110, not taking account of those taught at home.² A

¹ London, 1891, p. 148.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

hundred years later, in a population of 42,318,985, the number of boys attending school has however only reached 1,967,544: i.e. after one hundred years of British Raj the proportion is only three times what it was, when Sir Thomas was so "distressed at the rapid decay of literature and arts!" Hence it is very necessary to bear in mind that "the English efforts," such as they are, "have been materially furthered by the pre-existence of a widespread system" of indigenous education; and that the new schools were "simply reconstructions of the ancient indigenous classes, which we find to have existed in every village."¹

India was not a savage country when the English first chanced upon it: its culture was as great, if not greater, than Europe's, though it had already been seriously impaired by the hostility to it of its Moslem rulers. What the British began to do a hundred years ago was to infuse a new quality, a new spirit, into it. The moral principles of Christianity and the political principles of democratic government have ever since moulded the rising generations of English-educated Indians, and thus led to a renaissance of India as a whole. The Macaulay Despatch of 1834 led inevitably to the Wood Despatch² of 1854, which firmly established higher education of the Western kind in India and *inter alia* introduced the principle of State support to missionary schools—not because they were missionary, but because they were schools. And as for the aim and object of all this education policy we have an authoritative interpretation of it by the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal,

¹ *History and Prospects of British Education in India*, London, 1891, p. 16.

² So called after Charles Wood, first Lord Halifax, grandfather of Lord Irwin. As President of the Board of Control he prepared it for despatch by the Directors after due consultation with Trevelyan, Duff and Wilson. It imposed upon the Government the duty of creating a proper system of education, from primary school to university. The establishment of a Department of Public Instruction and of the three Presidency Universities goes back to it.

Sir Frederick Halliday, preserved for us in a letter from a retired member of the Indian Civil Service, Hodgson Pratt, addressed in 1905 to Gokhalé and quoted by the latter¹ in his Congress Presidential speech at Benares. "Fifty years ago," wrote Hodgson Pratt, "it was considered both just and wise to introduce measures for national education on a liberal scale. In other words, Indian youths would be brought up to admire our doctrines of political liberty, popular rights, and national independence; nor could it ever have been supposed that these lessons would fall upon deaf ears and cold hearts. On the contrary, the inevitable result of such teaching was clearly perceived by the Government of those days, and was regarded in a generous spirit. Sir F. Halliday, for instance, whom I accompanied on one of his winter tours through Bengal, called the attention of public meetings to the new education policy, and he always took occasion to declare that the schools would promote one of the leading purposes of British rule, *which was to prepare the people for self-government.*"

THE MUTINY

This then was the English mentalit , this the Western outlook, which Indians of that period were so eager to assimilate; this the reason why, when Gokhalé in 1905 founded his Servants of India Society, he could lay it down in the preamble to its constitution that "its members frankly accept the British connection, as ordained, in the inscrutable dispensation of Providence, for India's good." Lajpat Rai has in a mordant passage castigated² the excess to which the anglicizing enthu-

¹ See p. 703 of the 3rd ed. of *Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhalé*, Madras, 1920.

² "Everything Indian was odious in their eyes. If their English masters went to church, they did the same. If their English masters indulged in freethinking, they did the same. They took to their

siasm of those early days went: I must insist that there was a good reason for that early enthusiasm, just as there was a very good reason why that enthusiasm in the event turned into its opposite. That latter reason Lajpat Rai states with equal precision when he says that¹ "the first eye-opener was that, even if Indians passed I.C.S., I.M.S., and Bar exams., however able and clever they might be, no matter if they were Christians or semi-Christians or Freethinkers, there was a limit to their aspirations, both in the service and out of it."

In the famous Proclamation of 1858 the Queen solemnly declared: "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects; and it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge." It was a confirmation of the Declaration of 1833 of the East India Company, whose "government of the territories in India, heretofore administered in trust for us, we have for diverse weighty reasons resolved to take upon ourselves." The programme was an excellent one: it was received in India with enthusiasm, "and has caused a real outburst of loyalty to the English Crown, which has hardly yet subsided," as Wilfrid Scawen Blunt observes in 1883. "Its only fault indeed," he caustically adds, "has been that it has never been carried out."²

What is the explanation of so great a failure, what the reason for the arrest of the liberal and generous policy which had animated England and her agents in India until 1857? No single and simple answer I think is adequate. But the first and

dress, their smokes, their drinks, their beef." (*Young India*, edition of 1927, Lahore, p. 120.)

¹ Ibid., edition of 1927, Lahore, p. 121.

² *India under Ripon*, London, 1909, p. 312.

most important of all causes was the fact of the Mutiny itself; the fact that on the English side it was not regarded as another Indian War, but as the treachery of a "disloyal" soldiery. Yet the Mutiny was primarily a last bid of *quondam* independent rulers of the country for the reconquest of their principalities from the English: at the head of the great rising stood Nana Sahib, the last scion of the Mahratta Power, the defeat of which in 1818 had settled the question of British supremacy in India. That was less than forty years previously; and in the meantime Lord Dalhousie (1812-1860), who was Governor-General of India from 1843 to 1856, had annexed such surviving Mahratta Principalities as the Bhonsla Rajah's at Nagpur, Satara in the Southern Mahratta country, and the State of Jhansi. Vincent A. Smith in his little school history of India¹ graphically explains that "Lord Dalhousie was convinced that the subjects of any native State would benefit immensely by the substitution of direct British Government for the rule of a licentious prince, freed by the shield of the paramount power from the restraints imposed by the fear of revolt." It is impossible not to share that conviction: the fact remains that the dispossession of a Nawab of Oudh, as vicious no doubt as he was wealthy, created a feeling of fear and hatred not only in the persons directly touched, but in those of the great landholders, who in fact differed very little from the prince, whose faithful henchmen they were—both as regards the tyrannous nature of the power wielded by them towards their wretched tenants and subjects, and the ignoble uses to which it was put. Oudh was annexed in 1856: and in 1857 the Mutiny broke out and raged fiercest—in Oudh. Again, Dalhousie's logical and straight Scottish mentality wanted to abolish even the make-believe of a shadow Emperor of India, who, as descendant of the Mughals, still was, on paper, presumed to "rule" India through the

¹ I quote from p. 223 of the edition of 1908 of *The Oxford Students' History of India*.

Honourable the East India Company. This brought the Moslem nobility and gentry of Northern India into action: the people, who saw their hereditary power seriously menaced by the new-fangled notions of democracy and education, which were tending to place the Hindu bourgeoisie into the very places hitherto held by them by right of descent from the Moslem conquerors of Hindusthan. Fortunately for England, that ranging of the Moslems against her was sufficient to rally to her side the hereditary foes of the Moslems—the Sikhs; and it is this so-called “loyalty” on their part which really and at an early date was able to decide the issue in England’s favour.

But the Mutiny had thoroughly frightened England; and, instead of continuing boldly with the process of sweeping aside moth-eaten pretensions and vicious abuse of power, and thus rallying to her side all the forces of a renascent India, which she herself had called into being, the Government of the day (of Lord Derby) preferred to make terms with the “dominative” elements of old, rather than with the “political” ones of young India. The princes were by all means being placated and the right of adoption—so long denied—was once more restituted to them, thereby staying the ultimate natural extinction of their order. The Queen’s Proclamation, one admirable passage of which we have already quoted, contained therefore many others, devoted to “the native princes,” whose “rights, dignity and honour we shall respect as our own,” and which affirmed that “we desire that they should enjoy prosperity and social advancement,” and that “we desire no extension of our present territorial possessions.” The blight of distrust had begun to fall upon England’s relations with India: these people had “mutinied” once and committed dreadful atrocities—how could one trust them not to plan further “sedition”? After the Mutiny, testifies an eyewitness,¹ “the

¹ Frere, writing to Sir Charles Wood. Quoted by H. H. Dodwell in his *Sketch of the History of India from 1858 to 1918*, London, 1925, p. 250.

old sympathy with India changed to a feeling of repugnance; the old spirit of content with life and work in India, the old inclination to regard things in an Indian rather than an English light, gave place to a reluctance to stay in India longer than needs must, and a disposition to judge things by an emphatically English standard." Thus also—in the words of the authors of the Lindsay Report¹—"considerations of seniority became the primary, if not determining, concern in State policy. The former political liberalism of the administration tended to disappear almost completely, and while reforms, such as Lord Ripon's scheme of local self-government, were accepted, they were rendered more or less innocuous by the safeguards on their working."

Mutiny "a war, fought over so vast a territory and by an alliance which included more diverse forces than had ever united in India against any conqueror from outside?"² Yet to England a "Mutiny" it has remained: and as a consequence that, which previously had been hailed as signs of a people preparing itself for self-government, was now being eyed suspiciously as the plottings of men guilty of the crime of "disaffection" and "sedition." But, as we have said already, no single explanation suffices; and having stated what we consider to be the principal cause of the phenomenon which we are studying, we shall now turn to other contributory ones.

THE BUREAUCRACY

Of these the next in importance was the abolition of "Company" rule and the assumption of the direct administration

¹ *Report of the Commission on Christian Higher Education in India*, Oxford, 1931, p. 34.

² The terms are Edward Thompson's (*A History of India*, London, 1927, p. 70).

of India by the "Crown"—a measure which was by no means an unmixed blessing, however benevolent and beneficent it seemed at the time to all concerned. The Indian Trustee, Parliament, seemed to acquire a closer grip on Indian affairs by the elimination of an intermediary, who had, so to speak, "contracted" for the government of the country; whilst henceforth the job was to be done "departmentally." But that was just the weak point: for the Government Department has in all spheres of public life a knack of making itself appear omniscient and of assuming subsequently the omnipotence which flows so easily and naturally from omniscience. As long as the Company existed, the renewal of its Charter was made conditional upon a decennial overhaul of all its affairs and a very strict calling to account of its stewardship by a Parliamentary Committee, which as often as not caused the fresh Charter to be substantially modified. Once a Secretary of State's department assumed charge, an annual Material and Moral Progress Report was laid by it on the table of the House; and a criticism of it, which formerly would have been the duty of a small and specially chosen committee,¹ now became that of everybody in Parliament—and therefore that of nobody. Formerly the Home Government had been "content with laying down the general principles of policy and merely exercising a veto on the conduct of the Government of India: after the Mutiny the broad tendency was for more and more of the administration to be conducted from London."²

The India Office in London moreover now had direct control over its permanent officials in India: hence it identified itself with them, for, being responsible for their acts, it had to show a united front to the outside critic. The covenanted service of the Company's officials having been taken over, it

¹ As for the qualities of these Committees, that of 1852, the last, included such men as Gladstone, Disraeli, Cobden and Macaulay.

² Dodwell, *loc. cit.*, p. 15.

thus became soon a close corporation of experts and professional administrators who conducted themselves (and often really felt) as if they were—in Blunt's words—"the practical owners of India; irremovable, irresponsible, and amenable to no authority but that of their fellow-members." The terrible position in which a member of the Indian Civil Service found himself, vested with practically unlimited autocratic power, as he was, turned his very virtues to an occasion of evil. The more he was guided by moral principles and strove to eradicate wrong, the greater the danger of his becoming self-righteous and prone to a feeling of superiority. His high-handedness in such cases inevitably created a superiority-complex, the feeling of a vocation towards racially inferior beings, whom one rules for their own good with a wisdom and honesty of purpose, which seemed axiomatic, since they could not be called in question. In former times, indeed, a Civilian's judgment was largely influenced by the intimate counsel he often received from his Indian friends. After the Mutiny that living contact with his Indian environment grew steadily less. India had become, what it had not been before, a conquered country, and the period consequently saw "the rapid disappearance of the British soldier or official, who had Indian friends whom he genuinely respected as equals, and the emergence of a harder, sterner type."² The word *native* began to take on a new and sinister meaning, which has done more to create enmity between India and England than any other factor in the world.

And in this respect I must repeat—at whatever risk of seeming unchivalrous—what Blunt³ dared write in 1883, that "the Englishwoman in India during the last twenty years has been the cause of half the bitter feelings there between race and race." Everything combined at that time—the Overland Route, and the Suez Canal, steam-navigation and telegraphy

¹ Loc. cit., p. 313.

² Thompson, *History of India*, p. 68.

³ Loc. cit., p. 261.

—to strengthen the bonds which linked an English “exile” to his “Home Country” and to loosen those which bound him to India. The possibility of reproducing in India something like life in England became steadily greater and seemed ever more desirable, as frequent leaves “at Home” made the stay of Englishwomen in India increasingly easy: and the advent of ever greater numbers of them fairly revolutionized English society in India. Henceforth the Englishman in India divided his life into two watertight compartments: that of his office and that of his club (and home)—it is these two which “never met” and only because of that is it also that East and West have since not met either. The Englishman thereafter dealt with the “native” only in his professional capacity: from his private life India was ruthlessly eliminated; not least because feminine jealousy wanted to monopolize the interests of her men-folk and only permitted to India such of them as were strictly—and safely—impersonal. Blunt sums up his observations¹ by saying that “the Anglo-Indian official of the Company’s days loved India in a way no Queen’s official dreams of doing now; and loving it, he served it better.” And though I personally do not know those days, when the Englishman lived in India among the people and according to their customs, I may yet perhaps offer the testimony of my own experience in a closely analogous case, having watched that growing racial estrangement in Malaya, from the days, thirty years back, when large parts of it were still in the earliest “pioneering” stage, to the years after the great Rubber Boom which was followed by a large influx of English, who, under the inspiration of the ladies, succeeded in organizing English society there, with devastating faithfulness, upon the great models of Brixton and Upper Tooting.

There is one more point to bear in mind—and that is, that, though there was increasing realization on his part of the high

moral task, which the British Civil and Army Officer, under a heavy sense of stern duty, had to discharge in India, the task itself became ever better paid and the Indian Civil Service by far the costliest in the world, even taken absolutely, whilst, if the remuneration of these officials is taken in relation to the abject poverty of the average Indian taxpayer, the lack of proportion can only be called outrageous. "The excessive costliness of the civil and military establishments of India are notorious," says Blunt,¹ and he adds: "According to Indian reasoning, the vice of Indian finance lies in the fact that in India the Finance Minister looks principally to the interests, not of India, but of England. Two English interests have to be served first: the Anglo-Indian Administration and English trade." A great civilian, Sir Henry J. S. Cotton, who has so worthily maintained the old school of British officialdom in India, wrote in 1885²: "There is no great harm in saying, that the land belongs to the State, when the State is only another name for the people, but it is very different, when the State is represented by a small minority of foreigners who disburse nearly one-third of the revenues received from the land on the remuneration of their own servants, and who have no stake in the fortunes of the country." Blunt³ during his visit which brought him into such exceptionally close contact with real Indian public opinion, attributes similarly the agricultural distress which he witnessed on all sides, to the fact that the *rayat* (tenantry) is "the rack-rented tenant of an absentee State-landlord, who does practically nothing for the land, but squanders the whole land rent of the country, which it has absorbed to itself, on other things." Sir William Hunter in 1883 acknowledged that "the Government assessment does not leave enough food to the cultivator to support

¹ Loc. cit., p. 247.

² *New India, or India in Transition*, London, 1885, p. 53.

³ Loc. cit., p. 253.

himself and his family throughout the year"; and Mr. C. J. O'Donnell, who quotes him,¹ sums up an *Open Letter*, recently written by him, by the final verdict that "the *rayat* will remain the most pathetic figure in the British Empire, for his masters have ever been unjust to him."

And so cautious, if warm-hearted, a critic, as Dr. Macnicol, who speaks from the intimate knowledge which a lifetime as Presbyterian missionary in India has given him, does not hesitate to say: "It is not that we have not won the hearts of this people; we have not even satisfied their hunger. Whether or not the country as a whole, as some maintain, is growing richer, there can be little question that for the great mass of its inhabitants distress and hunger are no farther from them to-day than they were of old. The one aim that Britain sets before herself in the government of lands like India and Egypt is the bringing to them of a material content. If she has failed to accomplish that, she can boast of no success. And certainly in India she has not succeeded."²

REACTION AND COUNTERACTION (1859-1879)

I do not propose at this point to pursue further the economic issues to which our considerations have imperceptibly led us. Here all that is required is to establish the fact of the new turn which things took after the Mutiny, and to explain just how and why evolution, once having taken a wrong turn,

¹ In *Why India is Rebellious*. Privately printed in 1930. In the Rawal Pindi district, he says (speaking of the 1907 riots), that the land tax there had been put up by 65 per cent. in forty years! Mr. O'Donnell was for thirty years a member of the I.C.S., he is an ex-Commissioner of Bengal and an ex-M.P., and his witness cannot be set aside; it confirms only the other English witnesses, whom I quote: and in this matter I have preferred to quote only such.

² *The Making of Modern India*, Oxford, 1924, p. 7.

necessarily went on from bad to worse. With a "heaven-born" Bureaucracy, such as the I.C.S. more and more considered itself, it was natural that access to it should be denied to the mere "native." This, of course, went straight counter to the solemn Declarations of 1833 and 1858, and reversed all the Liberal ideals that hitherto had been dominant: but those, whom such *volte-face* surprises, should not forget that there intervened a complete psychological change, made with the same apocalyptic swiftness, as our generation has experienced in respect of all that has to us become "pre-War"; and the "post-Mutiny" attitude to the Queen's Proclamation can perhaps best be paralleled by much of our own "post-War" attitude towards, say, Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points.

On the Indian side, naturally, the reaction worked itself out differently—invariably in the direction of a growing resentment at the disappointment of all the hopes England had raised in Young India and at the frustration of all fruition of the gallant and remarkable efforts an anglicized Indian intelligentsia had been making. This resentment was all the more bitter, as the Queen's Proclamation was never formally withdrawn or repealed; it was merely in practice evacuated of all the meaning which in theory it was still pretended to possess; or—to use words which have become historic¹—"all means were taken of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear." Of what kind the "means" taken were, two illustrations will suffice, as they concern men whom the treatment meted out by the Governments of England and of India turned subsequently into adversaries of whom in any case we shall have to treat—I mean the cases of Surendranath

¹ The words are Lord Lytton's, Viceroy from 1876 to 1880, used in a confidential despatch which subsequently became public property. I quote from Gokhalé's speech at the Benares Congress, *loc. cit.*, p. 700. With Gokhalé, "I accept Lord Lytton as an unimpeachable authority on the conduct of the Government in evading the fulfilment of its pledges."

Banerjea and Aravinda Ghose. Both of these youths, the one in 1869, the other in 1890, aspired to enter the Indian Civil Service, and for that purpose, of course, had to present themselves in England for the tests to be passed. This circumstance alone, as one may easily imagine, was sufficient to reduce the number of Indian candidates very considerably indeed; still more so was the nature of the tests which naturally were made to suit the young Englishmen, who were wont to present themselves. However, both Surendranath and Aravinda triumphed conspicuously over all such handicaps: but this does not mean that official chicanery declared itself beaten. As for Banerjea,¹ the Civil Service Commissioners removed his name from the list of successful candidates, because in a document he had filled in for Calcutta University he had given a different age from that then given: the difference being due to the fact that in the one case the reckoning was, according to the Indian method, from conception, and in the other, according to the English method, from birth. This explanation, however, was deemed "unsatisfactory"—and it took a writ of *mandamus* in the Queen's Bench to restore young Banerjea's name. By 1890 the procedure—as in the case of Aravinda Ghose—had become more successful: the candidate had passed all examinations, it is true, but he was told that he had failed in his riding test. . . .²

Another instance of the same will at work against Indian aspirations was the reduction in 1877 by Lord Salisbury (then Secretary of State for India) of the maximum limit of age, for the open competitive examination for the Indian Civil Service, from twenty-one to nineteen years. "Throughout India," says Banerjea,³ "this was regarded as a deliberate attempt to blast the prospects of Indian candidates for the

¹ See his autobiography, *A Nation in Making*, London, 1927, p. 13.

² See Ramchandra Palit's *Life of Aravinda Ghose*, Howrah, 1911.

³ *Loc. cit.*, p. 44.

Indian Civil Service," and it led to an agitation, which can be considered the beginning of the whole subsequent movement for *Swaraj*. Banerjea had already, the year before, founded in Calcutta the Indian Association, which was "to represent the views of the educated middle-class community and inspire them with a living interest in public affairs:"¹ and it was not only remarkable for this—for similar bodies existed elsewhere²—but principally for the fact that its name was specially chosen, instead of Bengal Association as first proposed, because the new Association "was to be the centre of an All-India movement" and the active embodiment of "the conception of a united India, derived from the inspiration of Mazzini."³ The Indian Association now took up this matter of cheating Indians of their rights to the I.C.S. and decided upon an All-India campaign—the first of its kind. Banerjea was appointed "Special Delegate" and stumped the whole of India with a success which to the Government of the day came with a most disagreeable surprise. For until then "the idea of any Bengali influence in the Punjab would have been incredible; yet at the present moment the name of Surendra Nath Banerjea excites as much enthusiasm among the rising generation of Multan as in Dacca," as Sir Henry Cotton⁴ has placed on record in his *New India*.

As a consequence of this campaign, an All-India Memorial was addressed to the House of Commons asking (1) for the limit of the candidates' age to be raised to twenty-two years, and (2) for simultaneous examinations to be held in India as well as in England; and it was further decided to forward this memorial by a deputation, which at the same time would explain to British audiences generally the grievance, of which

¹ Loc. cit., p. 40.

² Cf. the Sarvajnik Sabha in Poona, of which I have already treated (pp. 46, 51).

³ Banerjea, p. 41.

⁴ I quote from Banerjea, p. 51.

a redress was sought at the bar of the Imperial Parliament. The expense was not small, but public subscriptions throughout India soon raised the amount needed and the representative chosen, Mr. Lalmohan Ghose, was able to proceed to England and there engage upon his novel enterprise. In this he proved an undoubted success—so much so, that he presented himself as Radical candidate at the English General Elections of 1879: and though he was beaten at the poll, he was the pioneer who first trod a path, along which Dadabhai Naoroji subsequently travelled with such distinction to the first Indian's seat in the House of Commons. Lalmohan Ghose's work in England showed the way of appealing successfully to Caesar—over the head of the local proconsuls—and it therefore became a method which up to the inauguration of a policy of national non-cooperation was skilfully and regularly used.

In the meantime reaction raged in India—the result of the Disraeli régime, which lasted in England from 1874 to 1880. With that curious power of self-deception, that came so easy to Disraeli, he had believed it possible to capture the "Oriental mind" by proclaiming the Queen in 1876 "Kaisar-i-Hind" when as a matter of fact he produced the very opposite effect—to wit "an undercurrent of national self-humiliation among the people of India," to use Mr. R. G. Pradhan's words."¹ However I cannot agree with this author's further remark that this event in itself was "comparatively small"—it had the tremendous consequence of depressing at one fell swoop all Indian Princes to the rank of vassals and made an end of the fiction, pretended by so many of them to this day, that they are on the contrary "allies." The Royal Titles Interpretation Act of 1883 only dotted the i's; since the formal acceptance by the Princes of

¹ *India's Struggle for Swaraj*, p. 43. What would have been the effect on England if, say, William II had won the last war and subsequently, as ruler of England, had assumed the title of "Duke of Normandy" with the avowed purpose of *flattering* the English?

the title "Empress of India" in 1876 the legal, no less than the factual, relation of the Crown to the Princes had become subject to the principle, overriding every other consideration, that the Paramount Power is—paramount, as Lord Reading, exactly fifty years after, very curtly told the Nizam of Hyderabad. From my democratic point of view I, of course, hail this development, which so clearly makes the otherwise irresponsible Indian Princes responsible to the Government of India: but this consideration not only did not weigh with Lord Beaconsfield, but was not even realized by him.

In other respects the Government of Lord Beaconsfield left the field in India to its Secretary of State, Lord Salisbury, who has the melancholy distinction of having sent to India the two Viceroy's who have done more harm, both to India and to England in India, than any other two that can be named—Lord Lytton and Lord Curzon. Lord Lytton imposed on India the Arms Act and the Vernacular Press Act: with the former he set the official seal upon the already patent fact that Indians were no longer trusted, and with the latter he tried to smother the rising flames of discontent, by blocking the chimney. Not content with these achievements, he provoked a war with Afghanistan, with the avowed object of adding that country to the number of existing Indian Provinces: and upon this wild enterprise he squandered money extorted from a *rayat* which thereby was becoming so desperate, that very serious agrarian anti-tax riots swept, for instance, the Deccan. Armed bands were beginning to go about having the sympathy of the people, and Sir William Wedderburn told Blunt¹ that "the state of things at the end of Lord Lytton's reign was bordering upon revolution."

¹ Loc. cit., p. 216

LORD RIPON

The victory of Gladstone at the Elections of 1879 thus saved a situation, which in India was becoming catastrophal, and it made possible that hearty collaboration between Indian and English democrats, which was the outstanding feature of the next quarter of a century's history of Indo-British relations, and which was only put an end to by the appalling fiasco of Lord Curzon's *principatus dominativus*.

"When Mr. Gladstone came into office in 1880," says Blunt,¹ "he found himself at the head of an immense majority in the House of Commons, pledged to the ideas of liberty in the East, of which he had himself been the foremost preacher. With regard to India he had formulated the Liberal creed in a single sentence: "Our title to be in India," he had said, "depends on a first condition, that our being there is profitable to the Indian nations; and on a second condition, that we can make them see and understand it to be profitable." And the man he chose to carry out this policy in India was Lord Ripon.

Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty can truly be called unique, in the proper sense of that much abused term. Let us recall first his life. Born in 1827, George Frederick Samuel Robinson, first Marquis of Ripon, began his sixty years' career in public service in 1849, as attaché at the Brussels Legation. Three years later he entered the House of Commons as an advanced Liberal, and in 1859 became Under-Secretary for War. In the same year he succeeded to his father's earldom, and, after a brief spell as Under-Secretary for India (1861-1863), entered the Cabinet as Secretary for War. From 1866 to 1868 he was Secretary of State for India, and in the latter year became President of Council. In 1871 he was raised to the Marquisate for his eminent service in connection with the Alabama Dispute, and in 1874 he took the momentous step of becoming

¹ Loc. cit., p. 1.

a Catholic. Viceroy of India from 1880 to 1883, he became First Lord of the Admiralty in 1886 and Colonial Secretary in 1892. When the Liberals came back into power in 1905, he was made Lord Privy Seal, and he died in 1909—one of his last acts being to vote for the Morley-Minto Reforms in the House of Lords, to which he had to be carried from his sick-bed.

When in that same year 1909 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya presided over the Annual Indian National Congress at Lahore, he thus mourned "the loss of the greatest and most beloved Viceroy whom India has known. Lord Ripon was loved and respected by educated Indians as I believe no Englishman who has ever been connected with India, excepting the Father of the Indian National Congress, Mr. Allan Octavian Hume, and Sir William Wedderburn, has been loved and respected. Lord Ripon was loved because he inaugurated that noble scheme of local self-government which, though it has never yet had a fair trial, was intended by him to train Indians for the very best form of government—of the people by the people—which it has been the proudest privilege of Englishmen to establish in their own land and to teach all other civilized nations to adopt. He was loved, because he made the most courageous attempt to act up to the spirit of the noble Proclamation of 1858, to obliterate race distinctions, and to treat his Indian fellow-subjects as standing on a footing of equality with their European fellow-subjects. He was respected because he was a God-fearing man and showed by his conduct in the exalted office he filled as Viceroy of India that he believed in the truth of the teaching that righteousness exalteth a nation. He was loved, because he was a type of the noblest of Englishmen, who have an innate love of justice, and who wish to see the blessings of liberty which they themselves enjoy extended to all their fellow-men."¹ It has seemed well worth quoting this

¹ *Congress*, p. 952.

generous appreciation at length, as it gives the reader an insight both into what Lord Ripon has meant for India and into the quick response which Indian hearts offered him.

Incidentally it cannot but be a matter of deep interest (and perhaps not only to a Catholic) that such a man as Lord Ripon was a convert to the Catholic faith. Banerjea¹ was in England at the time "when Ripon giving up his great position in the social and public life of England, deliberately faced the prospect of ruin by embracing the Roman Catholic faith"—and he adds that for this very reason India "welcomes Lord Ripon as a ruler for having suffered for the faith that was in him." I have come across a contemporary English testimony of the stir created at the time and the motives attributed to Lord Ripon, in the reprint of a sermon, preached by the Rev. J. Gornall, Anglican vicar of St. John's, Oldham, on September 13, 1874. In this the preacher refers to "the consternation which Lord Ripon's secession to Rome has caused throughout the country." "He is a nobleman of high rank and great wealth, whose abilities and personal worth have raised him to a lofty position in the country, and who has held important and prominent places as a statesman and politician."² Casting about for motives the preacher said: "Let us take for granted that the nobleman held dearly the Christian faith and regarded the Church as a spiritual body especially ordained by its founder to maintain that faith. What must he have felt during recent discussions in Parliament, when he heard the chief officers of this spiritual body declaring that the authority and power over this spiritual society is vested exclusively in a legislature which is not in any sense a Church body, is not necessarily a Christian body, many of whose members are enemies of the Church, and some of them enemies of Christianity?"³ All this only bears out the supreme fact that Lord Ripon was above all a man of principle and

¹ Loc. cit., p. 64.

² P. 4 in the copy at the British Museum.

³ Ibid., p. 12.

no mere opportunist: "the greatest virtue of Lord Ripon was his moral earnestness," says Sir Henry Cotton,¹ and Blunt calls him "a transparently honest man," "serious, but without the chill reserve which is so great a barrier between Englishmen and Orientals. It was noticed as a wonderful thing that, on landing at Bombay, his first visit was to the Roman Catholic Cathedral. He was a Roman Catholic of more than ordinary piety," and brought his own chaplain to India, Dr. Schomberg Kerr, S.J. "He is an honest man and one who fears God," men told Blunt,³ and wherever he went in India "his praise was in all men's mouths—Brahmans of Madras and Bombay, Calcutta students, Mohammedan divines of Lucknow, noblemen of Delhi and Hyderabad; everywhere he moved people to surprise and gratitude."

Nothing perhaps is more significant than that Lord Ripon should have brought out to India as his private secretary, General C. G. Gordon, or that the latter should have resigned very soon for the reason (stated to Blunt⁴ in 1882) that "the covenanted Civil Service's opposition to any real reform had convinced him that he would be useless in an impossible task." Lord Ripon's popularity was such that, in the words of Sir Henry J. S. Cotton,⁵ "Indians entertain an almost idolatrous admiration, his very name having quite a magic in every English-speaking Indian household from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas"—yet I for one would seek its highest test in the fact that it survived the three legislative measures, put forward by him in his own spirit, but drafted, stunted or killed by his subordinates and others of his race.

Of these three measures, the first was the Local Self-Government Bill. One of the first things the new Viceroy had said, was that he meant to develop the municipal institutions of the

¹ In Nateson's *Friends of India Series*, Madras, 1912, p. 35.

² Loc. cit., p. 3. ³ Loc. cit., p. 270.

⁴ Loc. cit., p. 83.

⁵ *New India*, 1885, p. 96.

country: for there the political education of the people really began.¹ This was followed up in 1882 by a famous Resolution, in which he called for the encouragement of a wide extension of local self-government, with the avowed view, not only of improving the administration, but of educating the people in the political art of governing themselves. "It is not uncommonly asserted," wrote Lord Ripon,² "that the people of this country are themselves entirely indifferent to the principle of self-government—a point of view which no doubt commends itself to many active and well-intentioned District Officers. To this theory the Governor-General in Council does not attach much value; for, as education advances, there is rapidly growing up all over the country an intelligent class of public-spirited men whom it is not only bad policy, but sheer waste of power, to fail to utilize." And soon afterwards, as Chancellor of Calcutta University, he told the students that "the time was fast approaching, when popular opinion even in India would become the irresistible and unresisted Master of the Government"; and, adds Banerjea,³ "no Viceroy has done more to promote this blessed consummation." Yet what in the end came of his local self-government plans? A poor little Act, "allowing native communities to mend their own roads, provided the Commissioner does not think them incapable of doing so," as Blunt⁴ witheringly puts it.

The second piece of work which this poor viceregal Sisyphus tried to get up the steep sides of Mount Bureaucracy was the unsettlement of that "Permanent Settlement" of Bengal, whereby Lord Cornwallis (Governor-General from 1786–1793) had transformed tax-collectors into landlords, had handed over the *rayats* to their tender mercy and had closed the door to any effective taxation of their unearned wealth in his or at any future time. In spite of the excellent motives of Lord

¹ Banerjea, p. 64. ² Quoted by Pradhan, p. 49. ³ Loc. cit., p. 66.

⁴ Loc. cit., p. 271.

Ripon and the firm trust which the people of India had in them, this gallant attempt of his was anything but popular: not simply because the *zemindars* (landholders) had understandably enough got up an agitation against it, but because everybody realized that in the end the bureaucracy would turn this measure, not into one effectively relieving the *rayat*, but merely into one, whereby the wealth of the only province, which until then had resisted the draining of it into the Imperial coffers, would have been diverted from the pockets of natives into those of foreigners.

The third measure was the most tragic of the three, and, though its failure had momentous consequences, it was in itself an almost insignificant little attempt at redressing legal discrimination against Indians. The Ilbert Bill,¹ to call it by the name under which it has achieved such sorry fame, provided that Indian judges—who already had jurisdiction over Englishmen in the Presidency towns—should, under exceptional conditions, possess similar power in country districts. This infinitesimal proposal sufficed to bring the cup of the English Ascendancy in India to overflowing. British planters were horror-struck at the idea that an Indian judge might in future perhaps be less inclined to look upon “ruptured spleen due to an accident” as an adequate reason for the sudden death of any *coolie* who had incurred his *sahib’s* displeasure: and they raised the cry of the probability of “native judges” abusing their power in order to fill their “harems” with Englishwomen! The Bureaucracy invoked the prestige of the ruling race and made it appear that the British Empire would rock in its foundations, if a white-skinned malefactor was to be permitted to stand his trial before a magistrate whose complexion might

¹ Of which, according to Banerjea (*loc. cit.*, p. 72) an Indian Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta, Mr. Behari Lal Gupta, “might be said to have been the originator.” Sir C. P. Ilbert was the Law Member of the Viceroy’s Council, and as such had official charge of the Bill.

be swarthy. A European Defence Association was formed with branches in all "stations" and a fund of Rs 150,000 was raised to protect the caste privileges of the White Race—and the tearing agitation it carried on, both in England and in India, was such that the Government of India bowed to the storm and withdrew its poor little Bill.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

This deplorable end of the Bill, however, cannot be ascribed to mere weakness on the part of Lord Ripon. The weakening lay rather in the Government at Home, which was becoming more and more fearful of living up to the generous principles, the espousal of which had brought its exponents into power. "Majuba Hill" (1881) was becoming a battle-cry for Gladstone's opponents, when in the Transvaal, the independence of which he had acknowledged in that year, only three years later the untold hidden gold of the Rand was being discovered. On the one hand he had drifted into occupying Egypt in 1882, on the other, Gordon perished, unrelieved in Khartum in 1885. In the meantime Bismarck in 1883 had let loose a perfect frenzy of Colonial Imperialism by deciding upon carving out for Germany a Colonial Empire of her own. The "scramble for the Dark Continent" followed and within a few years the whole of Africa had been partitioned amongst the "Powers," even Leopold II getting away with his Congo Free State in 1885, and Cecil Rhodes planning his All-Red route from the Cape to Cairo. Lord Olivier¹ fixes upon 1890 as the approximate date when "British Colonial policy was breaking away from its traditional principles and selling the national soul to the exigencies of the new enterprise of capitalized exploitation which inspires the Partition of Africa"; and, of course, things

¹ In his *White Capital and Coloured Labour*, London, 1929, p. 56.

did not come to a head really until the Rosebery Government fell in 1895: but already things were maturing and casting their shadows ahead, when Lord Ripon was more and more feeling that he was not receiving that full support from the Home Government to which he was entitled. The Vernacular Press Act had been repealed but not so the Arms Act; and as for the Ilbert Bill—it must have “left a rankling sense of humiliation” not only “in the mind of educated India.”¹ Thus frustrated, as well as “in his larger designs of endowing India with something like free institutions and finding himself without real support from the Government at Home, Lord Ripon resigned, before the term of his viceroyalty was fully over, recognizing that it was useless for him to prolong his stay, and amid the lamentations of native India, he returned to England a defeated, if not a disappointed man.”²

These demonstrations—characterized by their unanimity and spontaneity—in honour of a retiring Viceroy; “this spectacle of a whole nation stirred by one common impulse of gratitude, has never before been witnessed in Indian history.”³ “Lord Ripon’s unpopularity among the Anglo-Indians,” shrewdly remarks Lajpat Rai,⁴ “made him popular among the Indians. In him, they thought, they had found a political Messiah. Never before under British rule had the country been so enthusiastic in political matters. They gave him addresses, unharnessed his horses and otherwise showed their love and regard for him, which exasperated the European community beyond measure. Indians in Lord Ripon recognized the first British Viceroy who was prepared to make an honest attempt at giving effect to the pledges given by the Queen in 1858. They gave him a farewell which still rings in the ears of the older generation of Indians who took part in it in Calcutta, in Bombay, in Benares, and other places.” “If it be real, what

¹ Banerjea, *loc. cit.*, p. 86.

³ Cotton, *New India*, p. 6.

² Blunt, *loc. cit.*, p. 229.

⁴ *Young India*, p. 129.

does it mean?" asked Sir Auckland Colvin, the Finance Member of the time, in a pamphlet of that name, which was widely read and created quite a sensation. The demonstrations were a revelation to the Bureaucracy. "They extended from Calcutta to Bombay, and town after town, through which the retiring Viceroy passed, vied with the others in displaying its love and gratitude."¹

Can these bones live? had asked Sir A. Colvin, and, bewildered, had to reply, that indeed these dry bones had become instinct with life. "Political life had sprung up in the atmosphere created by Lord Ripon's policy," says Lajpat Rai² and the very defeat over the Ilbert Bill set on foot a national movement of organized cooperation among the Indian people, which as the Indian National Congress has had an influence upon the political emancipation of India, which, of course, none of the purblind "dominative" minds of the period could conceive.

Yet "it ought to be impressed on the attention of every student of modern India," as K. T. Paul quite rightly maintains,³ that for the Mysore State Dewan Rangacharlu (1831-1883) had already in 1881, four years before the first Congress, established a Representative Assembly—"a popular machinery devised deliberately to bring the masses into cooperation with the administrative machinery." At all events, the organization of the European Defence Association over the Ilbert Bill was the decisive act, which let loose the national avalanche and which led Banerjea to launch in 1883 a parallel All-India movement for the creation of a National Fund, and a National Conference was accordingly held in Calcutta in December of that year.

¹ Banerjea, loc. cit., p. 88.

² *Young India*, p. 130.

³ In *The British Connection with India*, p. 75. The same author justly points out that the "District Advisory Councils," for which Gokhale—taking up Lord Ripon's Local Government scheme—pressed between 1907 and 1914, were "analogous to what Rangacharlu had devised for Mysore in 1881." (*Ibid.*, p. 100.)

In the same year a retired civilian of Poona, Allan Octavian Hume, had addressed an open letter to the Graduates of Calcutta University, urging them to organize an association "for the mental, moral, social and political regeneration of the people of India—a little army *sui generis* in discipline and equipment."¹ These two streams met and there issued in 1885 the *Indian National Congress*. The idea was that there should be branches, or at least Selection Committees, throughout the country: and in the event delegates from Karachi, Ahmedabad, Surat, Bombay, Poona, Madras, Calcutta, Benares, Allahabad, Lucknow, Agra, and Lahore, attended the first "Congress" of this "Union," as it was originally called, of which Hume had constituted himself General Secretary. Hume belonged to the old type civilian, who indeed had passed through the Mutiny, but had preserved intact his old outlook and liberal attitude towards India. Like his Biographer and like Sir Henry J. S. Cotton, he looked upon the civilian as the consistent champion of native rights against English unofficals, and like them he deplored that "the longer we have occupied India, the less almost do we seem to know the life of the people." Contrary to the superficial notions of a newer generation of officials, they realized that "the Indians of rank and dignity are not the real leaders of opinion, who, wise in their own reticence and dignified in their self-respect, pursue their own course with as little communication with Europeans as is consistent with the exercise of their full influence."² Lord Ripon's successor on the viceregal throne, Lord Dufferin, realized this only too well, and, when Hume consulted him about his plans, told him "that he found the greatest difficulty in ascertaining the real wishes of the people and that it would be a public benefit if there existed some responsible organization through which the

¹ *Allan Octavian Hume, C.B., Father of the Indian National Congress*, by Sir William Wedderburn, London, 1913, p. 52.

² *New India*, by Cotton, p. 14.

Government might be kept informed regarding the best Indian public opinion."¹

Thereupon Hume paid a hurried visit to England and there also enlisted in all like-minded responsible quarters their ready support of the planned organization. On his return to India, a circular was issued over the joint signatures of Hume and Banerjea, convening the Conference and formulating its object. This was to be—"directly, to enable all earnest labourers in the National cause to become personally known to each other, to discuss and decide upon the political operations to be undertaken during the ensuing year; and indirectly, this conference will form the germ of a Native Parliament, and, if properly conducted, will in a few years constitute an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is unfit for any form of representative institutions."² Thus, with the birth, on December 27, 1885, of the Indian National Congress, a new era was inaugurated for the substitution in India of political for dominative government; and it must remain a happy augury for the future, that it was ushered in by the joint efforts of British and Indian democrats, who were primarily moved, not by narrow nationalist motives, but by a genuine devotion to Truth and Justice, in the vindication of which they both sought the true glory of their respective countries and the happy crowning of a century's work in mutually advantageous collaboration. But these men were not doctrinaire idealists either: they were practical men "embued with the spirit and methods of mid-Victorian Liberalism and bent on winning freedom by gradual steps, broadening from precedent to precedent."³

If the first steps taken by this Native Parliament were therefore characterized by great moderation and prudence, they yet were set in the right direction leading to Swaraj. The Government of the day looked benignly upon the infant

¹ Wedderburn, *loc. cit.*, p. 60.

² Pradhan, *loc. cit.*, p. 20.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Congress—so much so, that its first meeting at Bombay in 1885 was attended by quite a number of Government officials, who freely took part in the deliberations—which mainly centred around the reform and expansion of the Supreme and Local Legislative Council. This first Congress consisted of seventy delegates, presided over by Womesh Chandra Bonnerji (1844-1906), a barrister of the Middle Temple, President of the Faculty of Law, Calcutta, and Standing Counsel to Government¹—and, it is interesting and perhaps not irrelevant to add, an Indian Christian. At subsequent meetings of the Congress (of which the annual general meeting was until quite recently always held in Christmas Week) a number of Government officials continued to attend, but as visitors only. On the other hand Lord Dufferin in 1886 and Lord Connemara in 1887 invited the members of the Second and Third Congress (held respectively in Calcutta and Madras), not as such it is true, but as “distinguished visitors,” to a garden-party at Government House, and Mr. Sastri in his introduction to the *Congress* Volume cites Surendranath Banerjea concluding on the latter occasion a speech on representative institutions “with a panegyric on Great Britain’s love of freedom in his most glowing and exuberant style, therein reflecting exactly the abounding faith of the public in the green and salad days of the movement.”² By the time we reach the viceroyalty of Lord Lansdowne, we find Government taking up a distant, not to say frigid, attitude of correct neutrality. In a Government Order of 1890, the Congress is acknowledged as “representing in India what in Europe would be called the more advanced Liberal Party, as distinguished from the great body of Conservative opinion which exists side by side with it,” but the Government on its part stresses its intention of maintaining “an attitude of neu-

¹ Hume devotes a touching obituary to Bonnerji: see Wedderburn, *loc. cit.*, p. 89.

² *Congress*, p. 4.

trality in their relations with both parties.”¹ In the event, it was, however, becoming ever more evident that all the benevolence of neutrality was being reserved for “the great body of Conservative opinion.” “For neutrality,” caustically observes Mr. Sastri, “is a difficult virtue to preserve towards persistent critics. Officials soon became distinctly hostile and threw obstacles in the way of Congress. They called Congressmen amateurish politicians whose presumption was equalled only by their ignorance. We were disappointed candidates for office or unsuccessful lawyers. We had no knowledge of the masses and no right to speak on their behalf. We represented nobody, but our little selves. The great warrior-communities, the landed gentry, the proud and sensitive Mohammedans, the Eurasians and the Native Christians would have none of us. We were disloyal and seditious and abused the liberty of speech and writing, granted by a too forbearant Government.”² Blunt’s observation that under Lord Ripon’s successors “things lapsed into their old groove, and all hope vanished of serious political reform” is only too true; and equally so his analysis of the method to play “the great body of Conservative opinion” against “the advanced Liberal Party” of Congressmen. “The Mohammedans were favoured, but anything like vigorous action among them was discouraged.”³

MOSLEM OPPOSITION

This official pitting of the Moslems against the Congress has coloured Indian History ever since: it will therefore at this point be well, succinctly, to explain how such a position could arise—and in attempting this explanation, we shall closely follow a Moslem leader of Congress, Rahmatulla Mohammad Sayani (1847–1902), a leading Moslem of Bombay, of which

¹ *Congress*, p. 5.

² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³ *Loc. cit.*, p. 229.

city he at one time was Mayor. In presiding over the Twelfth Congress (held in Calcutta in 1896) Sayani¹ showed, how, before the advent of the British in India, the Moslems were the country's rulers—how the sovereigns, the chiefs, the great officials, the official language, every place of responsibility were theirs by birthright, whilst the Hindus were merely the subject-race, who, if even they occupied any positions of importance, did so as tenants-at-will of the Moslems. When the English succeeded the Moslems, the Hindus, all of a sudden, became fellow-subjects of the Moslems and, comments Sayani somewhat bitterly, "with their former awe dropped their courtesy also." Still, the position remained a fairly easy one for these Moslems. Moslem Collectors still gathered in the land-tax for John Company; Moslems officered their police and prison staff; Moslem remained the law and the language of their Government—Moslem, in fact, was the whole authority of the Company itself, not merely that delegated to it by the Moslem emperor at Delhi. Macaulay's despatch changed all that. A foreign language and a foreign mentality had to be acquired, to qualify henceforth for Government posts, and even examinations had to be passed in competition with Hindu nobodies. Whilst the Hindus availed themselves with avidity of the opening thus offered, the Moslems proudly and disdainfully stood aside.² The old generation passed and the young one continued, if at all, to frequent the old Moslem educational establishments, which however no longer prepared their pupils for any tangible goal. They therefore fell into disuse and very soon the Moslem community had not only lost all the educational advantages it formerly possessed, but simultaneously their former subjects, the Hindus, had by means of the new education

¹ *Congress*, pp. 326 ff.

² "The pride of conquest is the bane of all Mohammedan societies sprung from Northern Asia, and the Mohammedans of India form no exception," acknowledges so staunch a pro-Moslem as Blunt (*loc. cit.*, p. 290).

lifted themselves into a position of vantage, from which they could even successfully challenge the supremacy of their British masters.

The position of the Moslem community, it must be admitted, was galling enough, even if not entirely undeserved.¹ And the flame of Moslem resentment found just then plenty of fuel to feed upon. A wave of fanaticism was sweeping the Moslem world. Arab zealots had towards the end of the XVIIIth Century started the iconoclastic reform movement which goes by the name of Wahabism. Crushed in 1818 by Ibrahim Pasha in Arabia, it found in India a ready field for its propagation. Wahabism had already been introduced into Lower Bengal by a returned *haji* in the early years of the XIXth Century; but the real author of the movement in India was one Syad Ahmad, who published in 1818 the *Sirat-ul-Mustakim*, the Qurân of the Indian Wahabis. The first political effort of the sect was a *jihad* begun in 1820 against the Sikhs: it was also Syad Ahmad's last exploit, for he was, eleven years later, defeated and slain by the Sikhs. But the movement persisted and the Mutiny gave it a new impulse: the *jihad* against the Sikhs merely became a *jihad* against the English. After the Mutiny, says F. W. Thomas,² the Indian Moslems were "suspected of nearly universal disaffection and sometimes roundly accused of sending men and supplies in support of the Wahabi agitation on the frontier and of meditating a *jihad* against the English rule. The Ambala and Patna trials in 1864 and 1871 created a general conviction of their disloyalty." In 1864-65 eleven men had been sentenced to transportation: at the Patna trial in 1871 "it appeared that a whole network of treasonable propaganda had been established. Whilst the prisoners were

¹ The position of the Anglo-Indian community to-day, and perhaps the English to-morrow, offers a tempting parallel.

² In *The Mutual Influence of Muhammadans and Hindus*, London, 1892, p. 106.

under trial, the judge engaged upon the case was murdered, and Lord Mayo's murder in the Andamans by a convict in 1872 was believed by many to be not unconnected with the Wahabi agitation"¹—tragically enough, for it was just Lord Mayo who had given Urdu, Persian and Arabic a larger place in education, had subsidized Moslem schools and established special scholarships for Moslems.

It was at this precise moment, that one of the most remarkable Moslem figures in modern India championed the British Raj. This man was Sir Syad Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) who, of noble Mughal descent, entered service under the Company in 1837 and passed through the Mutiny on the English side. He visited England in 1869 and left his son there, to be educated at Cambridge. He had become so impressed with the necessity of making a liberal English education available to his community, that, on his retirement from Government service in 1876, he decided to devote the rest of his life to that cause. In the pursuance of this noble aim he had already in the previous year founded at Aligarh a Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College which became the nursery of an enlightened, modern-minded school of thought amongst Indian Moslems, which goes by the name of the Aligarh movement and which, though in many ways corresponding to the modernist Moslem movements of Egypt and, later, Turkey, has never gone as far as either. This College in 1920 became the Aligarh Moslem University and thus forms a counterpart to the Benares Hindu University, the genesis of which we have already considered in our previous section.

After the Mutiny was over, Syad Ahmad published a pamphlet in which he attributed its outbreak to the absence of all Indians from the Supreme Legislative Council, since Govern-

¹ Cf. Dodwell, *loc. cit.*, p. 253. Lord Mayo (1822-1872) had been Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1852, 1858 and 1866, and became Viceroy in 1869.

ment could never know the inadvisability of the laws and regulations it passed: and Sayani quotes a speech he made at Aligarh in 1866, in the course of which he had said: "The natives have at present little or no voice in the management of the affairs of their country, and should any measure of Government prove obnoxious to them, they brood over it, appearing outwardly satisfied and happy, whilst discontent is rankling in their minds." Such a man, one would have thought, would have been an enthusiastic supporter of the Congress: on the contrary, he was violently opposed to it and lent himself willingly to the official manœuvres to create a counter-movement to the Congress. Whilst the Congress met in Christmas Week of 1887, he called a Mohammedan Educational Conference to take position against the Congress; in the following year he launched a Patriotic Association as a counterblast to the Congress—and incidentally was made, in the same year, a K.C.S.I. This Patriotic Association, however, never did much, if anything, nor did an Upper India Mohammedan Defence Association, which he founded in 1893. Both died with him.

In a pamphlet, published in 1888 by Sir Auckland Colvin,¹ Hume calls the opposition got up against Congress "unsubstantial and unreal." He holds that this "so-called Anti-Congress Party owes its existence almost wholly to the promptings and support of a small but influential section of the Anglo-Indian Party," and he complains of the "frantic and unprincipled efforts of the Wahabi followers of Sir Syad Ahmad, to get up rows and fights over the matter." Of "the so-called leaders of the opposition, with the exception possibly of Sir Syad Ahmad (of whom I will say nothing, because I believe he is a little insane on the subject of the Congress), there is not one single one of them who in any way possessed either the respect or the confidence of his fellow-countrymen even before the

¹ And called *Audi alteram partem*. It contains open letters, both of Colvin and Hume, on the burning Congress question, pp. 32-34.

Congress question arose." Hume of course must be expected to defend warmly his own work: but he was right in his facts, for really prominent Moslems have indeed freely joined the Congress. Justice Badr-eddin Tyabji of Bombay was Congress President in 1887; Sayani, as we have already seen, presided in 1896. In that capacity he emphatically declared: "It is imagined by some persons that all, or almost all, the Moslems of India are against the Congress movement: this is not true. Indeed by far the largest part do not know what the Congress movement is." Which "blissful ignorance" unfortunately has subsequently been turned against the forces working for Swaraj, both by the Bureaucracy and the Moslem Communalists, both of whom meant to guard special privileges for their minorities, such as were indeed incompatible with any rule of the people for the people by the people. This inevitably provoked on the Hindu side a school of thought, which preached anti-Moslem retaliation, for which, as we have already seen, Tilak at about this time made himself the spokesman.

THE INDIAN COUNCILS ACT

Though angry waves on all sides thus began to hurl themselves against the Congress barque, the latter managed all the same to pursue its course and to make headway. Hume maintained that "the National Congress had endeavoured to instruct the Government, but the Government, like all autocratic Governments, had refused to be instructed. It now will be for us to instruct the two nations."¹ For India he desired an agitation which would turn every Indian into "our comrade in the great war that we will wage for justice, for our liberties and rights"; for England he envisaged a paid agency, which in fact was established in London in 1888, W. Digby, C.I.E., becoming its

¹ Wedderburn, loc. cit., p. 63.

first Secretary (until 1892) and W. C. Bonnerji, Dadabhai Naoroji¹ and Eardley Norton the Managing Committee. Charles Bradlaugh's aid was enlisted and a vigorous campaign was carried on. Lectures and addresses were delivered in all parts of England and thousands of pamphlets, etc., distributed. For 1889 the scope was further enlarged and Sir W. Wedderburn became Chairman of the Committee, which took as its formal title the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. A further step was taken in 1890, when this Committee published a journal of its own, *India*, which in 1892, became a monthly, and in 1896 a weekly paper. As Hume put it, "the India Office is an organization perpetually employed in popularizing the official view of all Indian questions, hence an organization equally persistent and strenuous in disseminating the Indian people's view of these same questions must be created."²

One of the results of the agitation in England was that Charles Bradlaugh attended the Fifth Congress (held in Bombay 1889), at which a skeleton scheme was drafted for introducing representative institutions in India, and that as a consequence he promised to move a Bill to that effect and on these lines in Parliament. This Bradlaugh did in 1890, and this action on his part forced the Government on theirs to move—which they did

¹ 1825-1917. "The Grand Old Man" of India, he had gone in 1855 to London as partner in the firm of Cama & Co. In 1860 he had taken a leading part in the foundation of the East India Association there, founded for the explicit purpose of ventilating Indian aspirations before the British public: it was also he who had started first the campaign in England for securing simultaneous examinations for the Indian Civil Service. In 1875 he became member of the Bombay Corporation, and in 1885 of the Bombay Provincial Council. He was the first exponent of the "drain of India's wealth" on the part of England, and was the author of *The Poverty of India*, which, written in 1873, was published in London in 1878. He sat (as Member for Central Finsbury) from 1892 to 1895 in the House of Commons: the first Indian to do so.

² Wedderburn, loc. cit., p. 90.

by introducing a Bill of their own, which, of course, only went a very small part of the way that Bradlaugh's Bill had tried to go. Bradlaugh, however, died in 1891, and the Government measure henceforward had the field to itself: under the name the Indian Councils Act, 1892, it received the royal assent in 1892.

To understand its scope, it is necessary to explain that the Governor-General has always had a "Council" to advise him. This Council consisted of course in practice of the principal heads of departments, and provided a means for the Governor-General to meet them together and consult them in matters which concerned them all and therefore were of general importance. In 1833, as we have seen, a Law Member was added; in 1853 a further change was made by distinguishing between the administrative and the legislative business, which would come before the Council, and providing for separate sessions, which for administrative questions would be attended by the Council, as hitherto constituted, whilst for legislative purposes the Council would be enlarged by two judges of the Bengal Supreme Court, and one additional official each from the provincial governments of Madras, Bengal, Bombay and Agra. As moreover these legislative sessions of the Council were to be public, the law-making process was subjected to publicity and to the discussion to which such publicity would necessarily give rise outside the Council. Moreover the laws, once made, were placed under the guardianship of the Courts and not of the Executive, and any changes in them had to pass through the same process of deliberation in public. Since, then, the procedure invited public opinion on the measures proposed, it was a natural development, to enlarge the legislative sessions of the Council still further, so as to include some unofficials as extra, or legislative, members. This was done by the Indian Councils Act of 1861, which added for its legislative sessions six more members of Council of whom, however, only three were to be

unofficials. Of these some have always been Indians; and an official minute¹ of the period explains how "the addition of the native element had become necessary owing to our diminished opportunities of learning through indirect channels what the natives think of our measures and how the native community will be affected by them." Unfortunately, the Indians selected by the Bureaucracy were invariably grandees, as complaisant as they were ornamental, of a type for which the popular nickname of "jo-hukum wallahs"² was coined: an inevitable result, where people supposed to be representative were nominated instead of being elected. The Act, however, marks a milestone on a road of inevitable development and was also important, inasmuch as it marked a devolution of powers to the Provincial Governments, and provided for the constitution of analogous Provincial Councils, with from four to eight members, of whom one-half were to be unofficials.

The Act of 1892 made momentous changes in principle, though both in appearance and in practical application these were carefully concealed—which once more proves how much more it was desired to placate European prestige than Indian aspirations. For one thing, the principle of election was conceded—but it was carefully called "nomination on the recommendation of —"; for another, the functions of the Legislative Councils were vitally changed by giving members the right of interpellation and of discussing (though not voting upon!) the annual budgets. The official majority of the Councils was, of course, maintained; but the non-official element in the Provincial Councils was to be "recommended" by municipalities and district boards, whilst to the Governor-General's Council five more unofficials were added, who were to be "recommended" one each by the four Provincial Councils and one by the Chamber of Commerce of Calcutta. At the same time

¹ By Sir Bartle Frere, written in 1860, and quoted by Pradhan, p. 41.

² "Yes, Sir-gentry."

all Government spokesmen, whether in England or in India, were meticulous in their emphasis, that this change by no means betokened the beginning of any parliamentary system and in particular that no responsibility whatever attached to a non-official's vote!¹ In fact the germ then planted was sound: the seed had been selected by Gladstone, and what he had in mind, he made clear when, in asking the House of Commons to accept the Bill without a division, he had said: "I am not at all disposed to ask the Governor-General or the Secretary of State at once to produce large and imposing results. What I wish is that their first steps should be of a nature to be genuine, and whatever scope they give to elective principle, that it shall be real."² There is no doubt that under the fostering care of a succession of Viceroys of the Ripon type, that germ would soon have lustily sprouted and vigorously grown, so as to bear the firstfruits of Swaraj in due course. Above all, let it not be forgotten, that the Councils, as constituted in 1892, knew nothing of communal representation and were therefore far more truly democratic in principle than their later successors. But, of course, it being merely a germ that was planted in 1892, it was likewise open to the powers that be to stunt its growth, and even so to sterilize it that it should never develop into anything more than a mere germ. The Gladstone-Rosebery Governments of 1892 to 1895 were but an interval in a Tory rule which had brought Lord Salisbury into power in 1887 and kept him there until 1904: and this is really the key to the future developments we shall have to consider.

¹ See for instance Lord Dufferin's Minute, quoted by the *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*. Cmd. 3568 of 1930 (the "Simon Report"), Vol. I, p. 117.

² Quoted by Pradhan, p. 52.

THE BIRTH OF EXTREMISM

At the time the Congress people were content to wait and see what working the new Councils could yield. Disappointed in even their moderate expectations, they yet felt that they had proved the value of their method of agitating public opinion, both in India and in England, in order to gain results. The 1892 Congress (at Allahabad) thus "while accepting in a loyal spirit the Indian Councils Act recently enacted, regretted that the Act does not in set terms concede the right of electing their own representatives"; but they hoped that the Rules (yet to be made) would implement the spirit to which Gladstone had given expression. Unfortunately these hopes were dashed to the ground, and Gokhalé in the following year (Lahore, 1893) had to tell the Congress that, "if the officer who drafted the Rules for Bombay had been asked to sit down with the deliberate purpose of framing a scheme to defeat the object of the Act of 1892, he could not have done better."¹ The President of the year, however, Dadabhai Naoroji, represented the general feeling when, in the face of such disappointments, he could say: "What struggles have there been in Parliament itself and out of Parliament for the Corn Laws, Slavery Laws, Factory Laws, Parliamentary Reforms, in short, in every important legislation! We must keep courage, persevere and never say die." Dadabhai Naoroji had just been returned to Parliament as its first Indian Member and he naturally looked in that direction for further success; he even threw out the suggestion that India, as such, should be represented in the Imperial Parliament by a number of "M.P.'s for India," not only *de facto* as he was one, but *de jure*, as the Irish Members were in the House, to represent the claims of Nationalist Ireland.²

¹ Besant, *How India Wrought for Freedom*, p. 166.

² Gokhalé expressed before a Royal Commission in 1895 a similar view. "Six men in a House of 670," he said (see Pradhan, p. 56),

All these Congress people believed in the close collaboration of Indian with British democrats, if their common cause was to triumph. Until 1907 Hume remained, alone or with others, in charge of the general Congress Secretariat; as often as not a European was elected as Congress President of the year, the highest honour political India could bestow—thus for instance David Yule (a Radical Calcutta Merchant) in 1888, Sir William Wedderburn¹ (who had lost a brother in the Mutiny!) in 1889 and again in 1910, Alfred Webb (an Irish M.P.) in 1894, and Sir Henry Cotton (the “hereditary” member of the Bureaucracy, as he smilingly used to call himself)² in 1904. The Councils were being worked to their capacity. Surendranath Banerjea³ in Bengal, Pherozeshah M. Mehta⁴ in Bombay, exhibited the vigilance, which is the price of liberty, and submitted all affairs that came within the purview of the Councils to so

“would introduce no disturbing factor, while the House will be in a position to ascertain Indian public opinion in a constitutional manner.”

¹ His biographer (S. K. Ratcliffe, *Sir William Wedderburn and the Indian Reform Movement*, London, 1923, p. 25) truly says of him that he had “gone to India under a religious sense of the significance of his work, and from the first had held to the lofty conception, that was his guide to the end of life, that he was a servant of the Indian people.” Born in 1838, he served in India from 1860 to 1887. He was M.P. 1893-1900: “for our sake he went into Parliament, for our sake he left Parliament: everything he has undertaken, was entirely for the sake of India,” said Gokhalé of him. (See *Speeches*, p. 809.) He died in 1918.

² His forbears having been Anglo-Indians since the XVIIIth Century. He himself was born (in 1845) in India, entered the I.C.S. in 1867, and on retirement in 1902 received a K.C.S.I. From 1906 to 1909 he had a seat in the House of Commons.

³ 1848-1927. I.C.S., 1871-1874; launched *The Bengali* in 1878; and Ripon College in 1882. Member of the Bengal Legislative Council, 1893.

⁴ 1845-1915. Called to the Bar in 1868; on the Bombay Corporation since 1873; Member, Bombay Legislative Council, 1895; K.C.I.E., 1904.

trenchant a criticism, as to make it impossible to ignore it and difficult to meet it.

But what was the good of it, as long as the power lacked to do things differently? Such doubting voices were not long in making themselves heard among Indians, especially of the younger generation, who increasingly felt, that such rate of progress seemed to contemplate a gradual evolution of centuries, not years, and who began to wonder, whether a more revolutionary method would not yield quicker and greater results. 1894 was a momentous year: for in the course of it an Abyssinian army had at Adowa inflicted a crushing defeat upon an Italian invader, who as a consequence had been unceremoniously bundled out of the black man's country. Was England really unassailable? Young India began to question the "moderation and loyalty" displayed by the Congress. There was, they argued, the case of Lord Ripon: even he had been bested by the forces of reaction and nothing tangible remained of his régime. Then after a ten years' struggle by constitutional means and an agitation in two continents which had cost lakhs of money and called for an unprecedented effort, there had come—what? This paltry little Councils Act! But if the travail of mountains had only been able to produce such *ridiculus mus*; was it not obvious, that the whole method of parliamentarism was wrong and that something more ruthless, more virile, more racy of the soil, was called for? In a previous section we have already sketched the process of reaction against the anglicizing tendency of an older generation and seen how Tilak exploited this new drift for his own purposes in a political sense. Now the elementary forces of Nature herself seemed to help his designs: for in 1896 India was visited by two dire calamities—famine and plague.

Blunt had already summed up the matter ten years earlier, when he said¹: "Agricultural distress is the major premise of

¹ Loc. cit., p. 255.

revolution in India, and political education, unaccompanied by political power, its minor premise." Tilak was the first to act up to this fact, when in 1896 he organized a no-tax campaign amongst the Deccan peasantry—well aware as he was of the existence, method and aims of the Irish Land League. Tilak was a patriot: it would be very wrong and quite misleading, not to put this fact first; but his patriotism was of the extreme nationalist type, which exalts country above ethics. And just as the patriotism in him had turned to nationalism, so also had democracy with him become demagoguery.¹ The foreigner was for him the enemy—and any stick was good enough, wherewith to beat him. When plague broke out in the famine-stricken Deccan in 1897—its first appearance there under the form of a virulent epidemic—that scourge, no less than the famine previously, Tilak tried to turn into means wherewith to scourge the alien conqueror of his country. The British authorities had taken sanitary measures to arrest the spread of the fell disease, and they had employed an English regiment in Poona, in order to carry them out. The soldiers' task was a difficult one at the best of times, and it would, of course, be asking an impossibility to expect a Tommy to understand Indian ideas and prejudices. The rough-and-ready ways employed by them naturally were not appreciated by people as sensitive about the privacy of their homes and shrines, as are Indians: and violent charges were levelled against the troops for having molested the women and defiled the temples.² That British troops have a high-handed manner with "natives" is in any case incontestable, especially as the only kind of Indians they ever come to know are their hangers-on of the cantonments. That Tilak did not exactly try to soften the popular resentment, is obvious; that

¹ "Tilak," says Macnicol (*loc. cit.*, p. 19), "was *Lokamanya*, that is a demagogue, the voice of popular passion, crude, violent, dangerous."

² Sir Sankaran Nair, presiding over the Congress of that year (Amraoti, 1897), graphically recounts the Poona Plague operations. See *Congress*, pp. 389 ff.

in fact he used to the full his journals for giving publicity to it, is not to be denied either. Unfortunately, just on the day when the British celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of their Queen, the Collector of Poona and a lieutenant of the British regiment there were murdered. There has never been any evidence that Tilak had anything to do with this murder, that his writings incited to such acts or even that he personally favoured them.

The Authorities at the time were not inclined, however, to take a calm view. A real panic, in fact, reigned in these circles and a widespread conspiracy, aiming at armed revolt, was suspected. Nana Sahib (the leader of the "Mutiny" of 1857) was a Chitpavan; Tilak too was a Chitpavan—was not perhaps a new mutiny preparing? "Firm action" was decided upon: Tilak was arrested (and in due course sentenced to eighteen months R.I.) for sedition; two great *sardars* (landlords) of the Deccan were for their criticism of the anti-plague measures deported under a Regulation of 1818, which had until that moment been allowed to lapse into desuetude, as it gave to the Governor of a Province the widest discretionary power without the necessity of even the semblance of a trial. The misgivings, which all the adherents in England and in India of the *principatus dominativus* had felt and voiced, since Lord Ripon had established the ideal, if not the practice, of a *principatus politicus* for India, were now deemed to have been amply vindicated and the British attitude towards Indian aspirations, in consonance with the policy elsewhere pursued by the Salisbury Government¹, stiffened perceptibly. A Sedition Act was hurriedly passed and the Criminal Procedure and Penal Codes were amended, so as to give greater powers to the Police and Magistracy. The Poona Murders of 1897, like the Mutiny, like all violence in fact, inevitably exacerbated feelings, both on the Indian and on the English side, and set the clock back for the

¹ 1896, Jameson Raid; 1898, Kitchener takes Khartum; 1899-1902, Boer War; 1900-1901, Boxer Rebellion.

time being. How little, however, violence cures violence is well brought home by the fact that Tilak through his imprisonment became a martyr¹ in the eyes of his people—the first political martyr in the cause of India's aspirations.

EFFICIENCY—AND LORD CURZON

It was precisely at this moment that there was a change in the Viceroyalty and that Mr. George Curzon, created Lord Curzon of Kedleston in the Irish Peerage, was appointed to begin a rule over India, which lasted from 1898 to 1905. Of him Gokhalé² has drawn a life-size portrait in his presidential speech at the Congress, held in Benares in the same year, in which Lord Curzon had left India—a pen-picture which I think cannot be bettered and which at any rate will reproduce the ripest judgment and the most balanced summing up on the part of Indians of what Lord Curzon's rule had meant to them. "His Lordship," said Gokhalé, "will always be recognized as one of the greatest Englishmen that ever came out to this country. His wonderful intellectual gifts, his brilliant powers of expression, his phenomenal energy, his boundless enthusiasm for work—these will ever be a theme of just and unstinted praise. But even the most devoted admirer of Lord Curzon cannot claim that he has strengthened the foundations of British rule in India. Alas! the gods are jealous; and amidst such lavish endowments they withheld from him a sympathetic imagination, without which no man can ever understand an alien people; and it is a sad truth that to the end of his administration

¹ "... convicted of charges, of which not one of his fellow-countrymen believed him to be guilty, and presenting himself before the Calcutta Congress of 1901: he received a splendid ovation, not as a culprit, but as a persecuted martyr." Lalmohan Ghose at Madras in 1903 (*Congress*, p. 772).

² See *Congress*, pp. 819 ff.

Lord Curzon did not really understand the people of India. For a parallel to that administration we must, I think, go back to the times of Aurangzeb in the history of our own country. There we find the same attempt at a rule excessively centralized and intensely personal, the same strenuous purpose, the same overpowering consciousness of duty, the same marvellous capacity for work, the same sense of loneliness, the same persistence in a policy of distrust and repression, resulting in bitter exasperation all round. Lord Curzon's highest ideal of statesmanship is efficiency of administration. He does not believe in what Mr. Gladstone used to call the principle of liberty as a factor of human progress. He has no sympathy with popular aspirations, and when he finds them among a subject-people, he thinks he is rendering their country a service by trying to put them down."

Lord Curzon's rule is a classical example of the dominative form of government, which aims, *non ad perfectionem operantis, sed operis*; not at self-government, but at good government. Under him "a system of government by efficiency reached its apogee," as so little unfriendly a critic as Sir Valentine Chirol has well put it.¹ Rabindranath Tagore has once pregnantly summed up this sort of government as being "untouched by hand"—the slogan which the advertisements for its bread of a European bakery at Calcutta had made popular at the time. Nothing really expresses better the difference in ideal between Indian and Western, or rather, human and mechanical, conceptions. The daily bread one eats is to be guarded against contamination: that much both have in common. But whilst the one aims at eliminating the human factor as such and handing over the material to a clever combination of iron

¹ In *India Old and New*, London, 1921, p. 103. Dodwell (loc. cit., p. 16) similarly admits that "it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that efficiency was over-valued by the Indian Government," and that (p. 250) as "efficiency increased, Government itself became more mechanical."

contraptions, called machinery, which will deal with it in the precise, invariable, soulless manner of the automaton, which it is; the other looks for purity in the person of the worker, who must be of one's own caste, better still, one's own family—one's own mother or wife. She will not make bread for mass-consumption: she makes it, then and there, for *me*, as I am sitting at my meal—her *chapati*¹ is meant for me, individually, and it comes to me, hot from the fire of our domestic hearth, instinct with her own individuality, with the warmth of her love, with the touch of her own hand. . . .

"Untouched by hand" an ideal? One shudders: yet that precisely is, that alone can be, the ideal of a bureaucracy. And Lord Curzon? "More than one Viceroy," says an old Indian civilian², "was content to become merely the gilded figure-head of a bureaucratic administration; others, such as Lord Ripon, stood for ideals abhorrent to officials and strove against heavy odds to enforce their views. Lord Curzon came to India a bureaucrat ready-made." Houghton in the book, from which I have just quoted, sketches the evolution of the Government of India from Autocracy to Bureaucracy, and from Bureaucracy to Democracy: and certainly, if the former evolution was hardly to be avoided, the latter is at least equally inevitable. For "though the I.C.S. were manned by angels from heaven, the incurable defects of a bureaucratic government must pervert their best intentions and make them foes to political progress."³ The very virtue of "efficiency" had in India become a vice. Inefficient methods of tax collection are not admirable in themselves; but their human element made possible an elastic system of live and let live. The rule of law is a magnificent ideal; what, if in India the ideal of law had superseded the ideal of justice?

¹ The Indian bread which is really an unleavened flat cake.

² Bernard Houghton in *Bureaucratic Government*, London, 1913, p. 103.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

Diwan-Bahadur A. B. Latthe, who as Secretary of State of an Indian Principality cannot be suspected, whether of ignorance of the subject or of political extremism, has placed it on record¹ as his considered opinion, that, the British Government in India being "a foreign power with no manner of concern with the socio-religious life of the people," the British official does "not conceive it as his business to see what is equitable and fair." He illustrates that startling conclusion by taking the example of a Hindu-Moslem quarrel over music before a mosque. "A Hindu Prince," says Mr. Latthe, "might tell the Moslems that their objection is unreasonable; a Mohammedan Prince the Hindus, that it is improper to disturb the sanctity of the mosque; a British magistrate would tell the parties to prove their *right* in the legal sense of the word." For in the British theory of government, "everything must be maintained intact": the British ruler will only "record existing practice and perpetuate it." That is his idea of being "impartial": which is only a way of saying, that he is "divorced from the social life of the Indian people, and that he has ceased to influence life in India one way or another, except in the direction of perpetrating evils, by clothing them with the sanctity of customs." This "impartiality" of a ruler from without found "communities and castes scattered all over the country, differing in faith and customs from one another"; and immediately presumed that they were "opposed to each other and that their interests clashed." Hence the British ruler felt it his duty to uphold each community's separate rights: but, observes Mr. Latthe with great acumen, "the logical result of this view was only to accentuate differences, to retard the process of unification by the obliterating of differences, to create a sense of differentness, where that sense did not exist at all or only unconsciously, and to perpetuate all forces of

¹ In his penetrating analysis of *Problems of Indian States*, Poona, 1930, pp. 156-158.

disruption.”¹ In their pursuit of a mechanical efficiency, the foreign administrators have only ended in being inefficient; being foreigners, they could but aim at a mechanical efficiency, an efficiency imposed *ab extra*. And this efficiency, even if at any given moment it had been perfect, could not remain so in a society which changes, as all human society will, seeing that those who administered the law, did not live under it and had therefore no means of telling whether and where the shoe pinched.

The fallacy is almost universally current in the West, that, after all, the British but continued a form of autocratic government, which they already found in the country, and that democracy is something utterly alien to the Indian mind. Nothing could be further removed from the truth. “Old Sleeman of the Bengal Army,”² speaking from his unrivalled store of knowledge of how matters stood in the old days, which in fact means only a little more than a century ago, testifies in his forthright manner that “there is perhaps no part of the world where the communities, of which the society is composed, have been left so much to self-government as in India. The village communities were everywhere left almost entirely to self-government; and the virtues of truth and honesty were indispensable to enable them to govern themselves.” Formerly justice was done under a *pipal* tree, i.e. in God’s sight. Hence witnesses adhered habitually and indeed religiously to truth:

¹ In the passage quoted Mr. Latthe lays bare the terrible, if unwitting, responsibility of British rule for the growth of Communalism in India: as for the misrule by Indian Princes, he exposes with equal acumen British “protection” as the root cause of it—that unnatural system, which “renders the Prince indolent, by teaching him to trust strangers for his security; and cruel and avaricious by showing him that he has nothing to fear from the hatred of his subjects” (loc. cit., p. 106).

² Lt.-Col. Sir William Henry Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*, London, 1844. See Chap. IX of Vol. II, on “Veracity.”

"they had not learnt yet, with how much impunity a lie could be told in the tribunals of civilized society. In these tribunals, introduced by us, they learn very soon that the judges are labouring in a 'darkness visible,' created by the native officers around them; whilst in the native courts, to which ours succeed, the truth was seen through immediately, as the judges could commonly distinguish truth from falsehood."

I have thought it of no little value, to transcribe this passage, which so admirably depicts the "inefficiency," the moral deterioration which in many directions has been the sequel of foreign rule, and above all the impossible task for a foreign bureaucracy, labouring in a strange land; those "European magistrates," to quote Sleeman once more, "whom it is in the interest of all to keep in the dark"—though that magistrate happens to be a "very superior person" and even a "George Nathaniel Curzon." "The government of India, local and supreme, has passed into the hands of groups of clever doctrinaire imperialists of the Curzon type, dogmatic and self-sufficient," wails an experienced old Indian civilian in 1908.¹ According to the latter, "the change came, when Salisbury made Oxford the training centre of the young men who were to become the administrators of India. The majority acquired that distant, superior, half-supercilious, manner which renders so many Englishmen difficult in their dealings with other races. And unfortunately the spirit of Oxford at that time was that of Jowett, Master of Balliol²—the spirit of jingoism."

It is certainly not fortuitous that one of the first matters taken up by the new Viceroy was that of Indian University education; nor that to the great Simla Conference of 1900, which was "to consider the system of education in India," not a single non-official European, let alone any Indian, should

¹ C. J. O'Donnell, *The Causes of Present Discontents in India*, London, 1908, p. 116,

² Curzon (1859-1925) was of course himself a Balliol man.

have been invited. The subsequent report of a Universities Commission, which had been appointed as an outcome of this Conference, "convulsed educated India from one end of the country to another," as Banerjea¹ puts it. It was inspired by the desire of greater Efficiency—of course; and it proposed to do this by making university education more expensive and by suppressing as far as possible, all private educational institutions. Especially the "law classes" at these non-Government colleges were to be abolished, with the avowed object of restricting the number of lawyers. As if any other result could have been expected than the crowding of the legal profession, seeing that other careers were jealously closed to educated Indians! In the event the Universities Act of 1904 softened down many of these harsh proposals, but so far from placating Indian opinion thereby, Lord Curzon had only succeeded in firmly convincing public opinion, that his real aim was to curtail as much as possible an education which he considered to produce politically undesirable results. The Act of 1904 certainly left the Indian University to be an institution meant, not for the fostering of the love of learning, but for the providing of efficient hurdles in a race after jobs.

Another instructive event in the course of Lord Curzon's rule was the *darbar* he held in 1902 at Delhi to mark the Coronation of Queen Victoria's successor. To men like him, a *darbar* of loyal lieges, assembled to do homage to their rulers amidst scenes of lavish splendour, was the proper alternative for Parliaments to offer to "the Oriental mind." The presidential speech of Lalmohan Ghose at the Congress held in 1903 at Madras ought to have undeceived him. Let us premise that another and even more serious famine had ravished India in 1899-1901 and that there had been a unanimous protest from all quarters, when the *darbar* was first mooted. "On what ground did they protest?" asked Ghose.² "Not because they

¹ Loc. cit. p. 175.

² Congress, pp. 745 ff.

were wanting in loyalty to the Sovereign whose Coronation it was intended to celebrate, but because His Majesty would have been the first—had he known—to forbid his representative to offer a pompous pageant to a starving population.” As for the only impression this *tamasha* could produce on the masses of the people, nothing, he maintained, “could seem more heartless than the spectacle of a great Government imposing the heaviest taxation upon the poorest population in the world, and then lavishly spending the money so obtained over fireworks and pompous pageants, while millions of the poor were dying of starvation.” If that was the effect upon the people, the princes and grandees refused no less to be “impressed” by a display which they had been compelled to provide themselves and which had nearly beggared them; whilst those of the educated middle classes, who on that occasion entered an appearance, “most of them came back with bitter memories of the different treatment received by Indians and Europeans, both during travelling and at the Darbar itself.”

The recklessness, with which the revenue, collected from the most abject taxpayer in the world, was being squandered without any possibility of calling to account those who were so generous with other people's money, was further glaringly brought home by the military campaigns to which India, unasked, was made to contribute in men and money: 13,000 British troops and 9,000 Indian camp-followers were sent from India and at India's expense to take part in the Boer War; 1,300 British and 20,000 Indian troops, and 17,000 camp-followers were similarly sent to fight in China. The Thibetan expedition (1903-1904), undertaken to increase British trade and establish “what is called Imperial prestige in Central Asia;”¹ the Viceroy's spectacular visit to the Persian Gulf in 1903; his forward policy on the Afghan border and in the Aden hinterland, not to mention India's share in the campaign in

¹ Sir Henry Cotton's expression (*Congress*, p. 810).

British Somaliland: all these activities of a "prancing proconsul" were undertaken with the money of an unhappy and unrepresented India, which was rapidly coming to share Romesh Chandra Dutt's recently published view¹ that the sole effect, and even purpose, of British rule in India was the economic exploitation and bleeding white of that wretched "Dependancy."

Efficiency?

THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

It is at a psychological moment such as this that fell the great thunderbolt of Lord Curzon's proposal to partition Bengal. The year chosen was ominous—1904, the year of the battle of Tsushima, when a little Asiatic Power, Japan, had vanquished the giant Russia, of which England herself had for a generation shown such undoubted nervousness. Japan's smashing victory could not fail to thrill India from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas, nor to be taken by her as a turning-point in the political relationship between East and West.

"Efficiency" was said to demand a rearrangement of the boundary between Assam and Bengal: Lord Curzon toured the Eastern Bengal districts and there heard personally such universal protests against the idea, that some optimists assumed that the proposal had been dropped. Still, meeting after meeting of protest was held, till over 500 public meetings in all parts of Bengal had proclaimed in no uncertain voice that the attempt to dismember a compact and homogeneous province, to which the people were passionately attached, and of which they were justly proud, was deeply resented and would be resisted to the uttermost. Memorials to the same effect poured in upon the

¹ His *Economic History of British India, 1757-1900*. Born in 1848, he was a member of the I.C.S., from 1871 to 1897, and made a C.I.E. in 1892. He presided over the Congress at Lucknow in 1899.

Viceroy, who kept ominously silent. The Secretary of State was implored to withhold his sanction to the proposed measure. A monster petition, signed by 60,000 people, was sent to Parliament, and a debate on the subject was raised in the House itself. All proved unavailing: the scheme, greatly expanded, was sprung upon the Indian public as "a settled fact" through the pages of the *Official Gazette* of July 20, 1905.

Gokhalé, in that wonderful speech of his at Benares five months later,¹ could well say: "The Viceroy had made up his mind. The officials under him had expressed approval. What business had the people to have an opinion of their own and to stand in the way? To add insult to injury, Lord Curzon described the opposition to his measure as 'manufactured'—an opposition in which all classes of Indians, high and low, uneducated and educated, Hindus and Mohammedans, had joined, an opposition than which nothing more intense, nothing more widespread, nothing more spontaneous, had been seen in the country in the whole of our political agitation!" That supreme contempt so provocatively shown, so studiously rubbed in, of the Heaven-born for "the men of a lesser breed," for statesmen like Gokhalé himself, for poets like Tagore, for great judges like Sir Gurudas Banerji, for distinguished noblemen like the Maharajas of Mymensingh and Kassimbazar—that is what rankled above all, what exasperated all Indian opinion so intensely. Even so balanced a mind as Gokhalé's, so mature in his judgments, so careful in his expressions, revolted at this demonstration of the utter humiliation and helplessness of his race, when men whom any country ought to be proud to own, were treated no better than dumb driven cattle: and few people at this distance of time will be found to disagree with him, when he—the traditional upholder of the divinely ordained Indo-British connection—passionately concluded: "I can conceive of no graver indictment of British

¹ *Congress*, p. 825.

Rule than that such a state of things should be possible after a hundred years of that rule."

But this spurning of all Indian opinion stood not alone in making the Partition odious. The whole purpose and effect of the measure was manifestly Macchiavellian; it was meant to break up the solidarity of the Bengali race and of their great province of eighty millions; it was to limit the natural influence upon them of their capital, Calcutta, with its politically so wide-awake intelligentsia; it was, above all, to create rivalry between the new Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, which was set up with the openly expressed aim of making it a Mohammedan Province, and the predominantly Hindu Province of the rest of Bengal. And not only Bengal, stung to the quick, but all India, understood these motives, which had prompted Lord Curzon's latest, and indeed last, measure. An outcry went up against it, which made India ring from one end to another; but, of course, far from making Lord Curzon pause, such popular outburst "engineered by a few agitators," only convinced him that at all costs the measure must be carried into effect and "Government Prestige" maintained. Though he had resigned already his Viceroyalty (in consequence of his differences with Lord Kitchener, the new Indian Commander-in-Chief), he insisted on the Partition being actually carried out, before he left India, and on thus making sure, that he left behind him "a settled fact." On July 20, 1905, the Partition had been gazetted; on October 16th it was carried into effect; on November 18th Lord Curzon sailed from India; on February 13, 1906, Campbell-Bannerman succeeded Balfour as Prime Minister of England. The Dead Sea fruit into which Lord Curzon had bitten with his wonted determination, was to set on edge the teeth, not only of his Tory successor as Viceroy, Lord Minto, but of John Morley, the Radical Secretary of State, who was to shape his policy.

The deliberate defiance and indeed challenge of Lord Cur-

zon's gave to the anti-Partition agitation a strength and a fervour, which previous protest movements had lacked. Formerly meetings were held, resolutions were passed, perhaps deputations were sent to wait upon Viceroy or Secretary of State: but there was nothing in the meantime that the people at large could do. Not so this time. The Chinese were just at the time conducting a most successful boycott-campaign against American goods, to emphasize the indignation they felt at the exclusion of Chinese immigrants from the United States. If Chinese people were unable to enter America, American goods were to be unable to enter China. This boycott was reported to be most successful and to have inflicted heavy losses on American business. India eagerly fastened upon this example and copied it. At a great demonstration at the Calcutta Town Hall on August 7, 1905, India's analogous boycott was launched "as a protest against the indifference of the British public in regard to Indian affairs and the consequent disregard of Indian public opinion by the present Government," and it was decided "to abstain from the purchase of British manufactures so long as the Partition Resolution is not withdrawn."¹ As we have seen already, the Partition Resolution, so far from being withdrawn, was given effect to: but that very day, October 16th, was proclaimed as a day of fasting and of the cessation of all business,² of religious purification and penitence. By that time a merely political boycott had become a religious movement, *swadeshi* (our own country's) goods were to be used, so that a Hindu might not defile himself by using such made by aliens. A religious vow, taken in a temple to adhere to Swadeshism became usual³ and, as Banerjea—"Surrender-Not Banerjea" had become the hero of the Bengal campaign—

¹ Banerjea, *loc. cit.*, p. 192.

² *Hartal*, as the Indian term has it—a term not unfamiliar nowadays even to people outside India.

³ Banerjea gives its tenor, p. 228.

says, an emotional atmosphere had been created, which "young and old, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, breathe. All are swayed and even transported by the invisible influence felt; reason halts, judgment is held in suspense; it is one mighty impulse that moves the heart of the community and carries everything before it."¹ Out of this Bengali emotionalism there thus sprang the new Nationalism of India, the further developments of which we shall presently study.

In the meantime we must revert to Congress and the more sober, but not less profound, impression the Partition of Bengal had created elsewhere in India. Already the year before, at the 1904 Congress held in Bombay, a resolution had been passed, emphatically protesting against the proposals for the Partition of Bengal "in any manner whatsoever."

Gokhalé² and Lajpat Rai were deputed to visit England "in view of the new approach of a General Election" and to bring "the claims of India before the electors": on his return Gokhalé had to preside over the Congress which in 1905 was held at Benares. I have already sufficiently quoted from the great speech he made on that occasion: suffice it to state here that one so much a "Moderate" as Gokhalé accepted the boycott of foreign goods "as a last protest and perhaps the only constitutional and effective means left of drawing the attention of the British public to the action of the Government of India in persisting in their determination to partition Bengal, in utter disregard of the universal prayers and protests of the people." Pandit M. M. Malaviya proposed a resolution to that effect and Lajpat Rai, in seconding it, called upon India "no longer to be content to be beggars, whining for favours; for if they

¹ Loc. cit., p. 197.

² Gokhalé in the meantime had served in 1900-1901 on the Bombay Legislative Council, and since 1902 was a member of the Supreme Legislative Council, of which he became the outstanding figure—as much feared as respected by the officials. In his famous passages-at-arms with Lord Curzon steel had encountered steel.

really cared for their country they would have to strike a blow for freedom themselves." A new turn was given to Indian politics: the policy of "mendicancy," as the Congress method was derisively called, was henceforth even more seriously assailed—and significantly enough that great Indian Sinn Feiner (and adversary of Gokhalé)—Tilak—was once more received with an ovation, as at Benares he rose to speak on Passive Resistance, on Famine, and on Poverty: and a resolution welcoming the Prince of Wales's visit was only carried by an arrangement whereby the Bengal delegates withdrew from the meeting for the nonce.

Dr. Macnicol has called Gokhalé a statesman and Tilak a demagogue: put somewhat differently, as he does elsewhere, "the Moderates are not carried off their feet, but neither do they carry others off their feet."¹ This latter fact became increasingly patent and led to developments which we shall presently consider: for the time being Gokhalé still dominated the scene.

"My recent visit to England," he said,² "has satisfied me that a strong current has already set in there against that narrow and aggressive Imperialism, which only the other day seemed to be carrying everything before it. The new Prime Minister is a tried and trusted friend of Freedom. Mr. Ellis, the new Under-Secretary of State for India, is openly known to be a friend of our aspirations. And as regards the new Secretary of State for India, what shall I say? Our heart hopes and yet trembles, as it had never hoped nor trembled before. John Morley—the reverent student of Burke, the disciple of Mill, the friend and biographer of Gladstone—will he courageously apply their principles and his own to the government of this country; or will he succumb, too, to the influences around him?" In these prophetic words his clear mind and stout heart seemed to hope for the best and expect the worst: his sublime sense of duty

¹ Loc. cit., p. 28.

² *Congress*, p. 852.

told him to leave nothing untried, to save both England and India from the inclined plane, down which he saw them gliding; and as a deeply religious soul he above all placed the future in the hands of the Divine Providence. The young hotheads around him he reminded that "youth shows but half"—and he closed his great speech with the great words so typical of himself: "Trust God; see all nor be afraid."

Thus Gokhalé once more was charged by Congress to proceed to England and cooperate with the new Secretary of State in order to extricate Indo-British relations from the perilous position into which they had got. He worked indefatigably in England to that end—but, alas! he had had only too good reason "to tremble" as much as "to hope," when at Benares he had referred to John Morley. Not only did Morley emphatically state that the Partition of Bengal was "a settled fact, which could no longer be unsettled"; on the wider issue of Colonial Self-Government, which India demanded, he was equally antagonistic and emphatic, telling Gokhalé that, to ask for it, was merely to cry for the moon. "The fur coat of Canada's Constitution," he sagely added, "would never suit the actual conditions of the historical, cultural and psychological climate of India."¹ Such was the John Morley (soon Lord Morley) of the India Office—a person who seemed to be a mere namesake of the late fiercely Radical editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. "The shock was great," sadly comments Sir Henry Cotton,² "when it was known that he was as absolutely in the hands of the permanent officials of the India Office, as his predecessors. It remains a marvel to me, that he should so easily have surrendered at discretion and abandoned the principles of a lifetime. It was pitiful to hear his recantations invariably cheered from the Opposition Benches amid the depressing silence of

¹ Pradhan, loc. cit., p. 95.

² P. 39 of Natesan's *Friends of India Series* (Sir Henry Cotton), Madras, 1912.

his own followers." Dodwell¹ calls him "a first-class man in the academic, but not in the broad sense of the term," and comparing him with Minto, he calls Morley "more intellectual and less intelligent. With advancing years he became capricious, dogmatic and domineering." Brilliant as had been the application of Morley's intellectual powers to analysis and critical attack, is there not a lack in the make-up of an agnostic, which naturally becomes evident, when constructive work and sympathetic understanding are called for? This would certainly explain why so often "the Tory Viceroy outran the prudence of the Radical Secretary," as a contemporary jibe put it. Morley's failure at this moment was in any case tragic. It sufficed to convince India more and more, that "mendicancy" led nowhere, that an alliance between Indian and English democrats was a chimaera, and that the only motto for the future must be Sinn Fein's: "Ourselves Alone."

THE CONGRESS SPLIT

It was in such an atmosphere—not rendered any calmer by the fact that Calcutta had been chosen for its venue—that Congress met in 1906, under the presidency of India's Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji, then 82 years old. His speech was read for him by Gokhalé, who had returned from his disappointing visit to England. The New Party, that had begun to form itself within the Congress itself looked with undisguised contempt on the moderation of the Moderates. Led by Tilak and Bepin Chandra Pal, they asked for a boycott, not only of English goods, but of the English Government itself, and the setting up of a rival *swadeshi* Government. Only the tact and authority of Dadabhai Naoroji prevented an open rupture. As it was, he declared that the goal Congress was pledged to,

¹ Loc. cit., p. 278.

was *Swaraj*—no longer the “Colonial self-government within the Empire,” of which hitherto Congress Resolutions had treated. The word was for the first time officially used on that occasion; and since then *Swadeshi* and *Swaraj* have become the two foci, around which the ellipse of the Congress’s orbit has been plotted. At this Calcutta Congress the irreconcilable antagonism between Gokhalé and Tilak entered upon a new phase; but in addition, a new personality had entered the Congress arena and made himself conspicuous during the *Swadeshi* and *Swaraj* discussions—Aravinda Ghose. Known to us already as the youth who had been excluded from a career in the I.C.S. on account of his failure to pass a riding test, he had been in the service of the Gaekwar of Baroda from 1893 to 1905, when he left it in order to become Principal of the National Council of Education, Bengal, which was to organize a boycott of Government schools and colleges and provide a “national” substitute. In 1906 he became Editor of a new nationalist paper, *Bande Mataram*, in which he preached “the only two modes to effect the fulfilment of national desires: self-help and passive resistance.”

Bande Mataram! “Hail Mother!”—the cry had gone up from one end of Bengal to the other. In the words of Bepin Chandra Pal (1856-1932) in *The New Spirit* (which was animating the New Party)—*Bande Mataram* had become “a *mantra*, a power, an inspiration, a revelation, truth.”¹ Originally a beautiful song, describing the delights of India, our Motherland, it was taken from the novel *Anandamath* (Abbey of Bliss) of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and at

¹ B. C. Pal, *The New Spirit*, Calcutta, 1907, p. 71. The author rose to fame in 1905 as one of the fiercest Radicals of Young India, and constituted one of the famous trio “Lal, Bal, Pal” (meaning thereby Lala Lajpat Rai, Lokmanya Balgangadhar Tilak and Babu Bepin Chandra Pal). A great publicist all his life, his views changed with age and in the end he belonged to the extreme right of the Liberal Party and became a regular contributor to the English Press in India.

this time became the National Anthem of Renascent India. Chatterjee (1838-1894), for 33 years in the Indian Civil Service and a C.I.E., is one of the founders of modern Bengali prose literature. He wrote in 1882 his *Anandamath*—a historical novel dealing with the Sannyasi Rebellion of 1772-1775—in the tenth chapter of which occurs the hymn *Bande Mataram*. In Chapter XI follows the allegorical interpretation of *Matri-puja* (Worship of the Mother)—the Mother as she was, is and shall be—which Pal took up at this time and by his passionate articles rendered famous and popular. The Mother as she had been: *Jagaddhatri*, world-mother; the Mother as she is—*Kali*: “covered with the blackest gloom, despoiled of all wealth, and without a cloth to wear. The whole of the country is a land of death and so the Mother has no better ornament than a garland of skulls. Her own Good she cruelly tramples under her feet”; the Mother, as she is to be: *Durga*, ten-handed, the wielder of many arms and chastiser of her foes, the enemy trampled under her feet and the lion at her feet engaged in killing her foes; Lakshmi to her right and Vani, the spring of knowledge and science, to her left; with her stand Kartik, the emblem of strength, and Genesa, the god of success.”¹ Pal adds the further gloss that “originally *Durga Puja* was a ceremony especially associated with war,” and that the animal sacrifices connected therewith—“emphatic as our condemnation of these carnal and cruel sacrifices must now be”—had been intended to “quicken the martial spirit.” But to-day, continues Pal, “Durga is for us not a mythological figure, but a representation of the Eternal Spirit of the Indian Race; the symbol of Omnipotence in its dual aspect of Eternal Love and Inevitable Retribution, through which this very Love has to fulfil and realize itself in this world.” And, he grimly concludes²: “Omnipotence has no message for the weakling.”

¹ I quote from Nareschandra Sen-Gupta's translation, 5th ed., Calcutta, 1906.

² Loc. cit., pp. 81-89.

Such was the *form* that Pal sought to give to the *matter* of inchoate religious and political emotionalism which was pervading all Bengal at the time. Like him, Aravinda Ghose¹ felt that "independence in all our movements is the goal of life, and Hinduism alone will fulfil this aspiration of ours." To him, "Nationalism is a religion that comes from God. Nationalism cannot die, because it is God who is working in Bengal. God cannot be killed. God cannot be sent to gaol." Here we have the ancient Vedantic "I-am-He" placed at the service of a very modern Nationalism: but then, for him "Nationalism in India to-day is the sweet harmony between the new ideal of Mazzini and the old ideal of *sannyasa*!" Hence, "what is wanted for political leadership in India is not wealth nor social position, but real self-sacrifice in the cause of the Motherland. We want political *sannyasis* for the regeneration of our country." (Here we get another echo of the dramatized Sannyasi Revolt of Bankim Babu!) He, who had nearly himself perished as a Bengali—who had lived in England since he was 7, and at 17 had to learn Bengali for his I.C.S. examination, as any English boy would have had to—Aravinda Ghose, who had bartered away his Indian soul in order to be English, quite English—only to find that England contemptuously tossed him aside as a mere "native" of that India which he had so disastrously forsaken; he, with a poignancy which few others can have felt quite as intensely, did "not wish India to perish as a nation." To him "*Swaraj* is not the colonial form of government; it means the fulfilment of our national life. That is, why God has sent us into the world—to glorify Him by perfecting ourselves in our individual life, in family, in the community, in the nation, in humanity."

Such were the new ideals, the revolutionary forces that at this moment captured the imagination of the rising generation.

¹ The following quotations are taken from Ramchandra Palit's *Life of Aravinda Ghose*, Howrah, 1911.

Hence men like Pal¹ had nothing but withering scorn for "Mr. Morley with his policy of sympathy and soft-sawder" and for the men from whom he "had evidently taken his cue: Mr. Gokhalé, Sir Henry Cotton, Sir William Wedderburn and other Congress men, who have themselves hardly any appreciation of the ideals and forces at work among us." He frankly hated this crew; and with the most rabid English Imperialist held that English people could not, and were quite right in refusing to "think lightly of losing their great Dependency to satisfy abstract principles of right and justice." He wholeheartedly agreed with them, that, "whatever solitary idealist and faddist might say, or unpatriotic Little Englander might foolishly contend, England cannot reasonably consent even to equally share her advantages with the children of the soil." The New Party's hatred for this Old Gang of Moderates was due to the conviction that their respective ideals were poles asunder: "they desire to make the Government of India popular, without making it cease to be in any sense British; we desire to make it autonomous, absolutely free of the British Control."² Thus the Indian Democrats, who hitherto had only had to fight against the British Imperialists, were now assailed on an additional front by the Indian Nationalists.

Perhaps I may recall here the Catholic Nationalist of Bengal, of whom I have already written in my previous section—Upadhyaya Brahmabandhav, who certainly cannot be understood, unless he is placed against the natural background of his time, which he helped so largely to shape. Another Catholic of Bombay was becoming prominent then, along with his leader and associate, Tilak: I mean Joseph Baptista (1864–1930), who had been called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1899 and had entered the Bombay Corporation in 1901. To his

¹ *The New Spirit*, p. 235. Note that this passage was written as early as 1906!

² Pal, loc. cit., p. 240

mind the Congress was altogether on the wrong track in fastening upon particular grievances: what he urged, was to concentrate upon the acquisition of power. Like him, Tilak¹ wanted to bring pressure to bear, both upon the Bureaucracy and upon England, by diverting trade and obstructing government: his idea was, simply to refuse acknowledging such measures as the Seditious Meetings Act, to get 3-4,000 passive resisters imprisoned at the same time and thus to bring government to a standstill. "Your revolution must be bloodless," Tilak was wont to tell his followers, "but that does not mean that you may not have to suffer or to go to jail." He had no illusions about being able to abolish British rule at once and completely: he wanted the actual rulers to come to terms with the potential rulers of the country, and he wanted to force them to make these terms advantageous to his people. On the other hand Nevinson found "in all Bengali Nationalists a religious tone, a spiritual elevation, which stands in strong contrast with the shrewd political judgment of the Poona Extremists." The two forms of extremism indeed mirror faithfully the respective characteristics of the people of Bengal and Maharashtra: imagination, poetic charm and an ingredient of hysteria on the one side; deliberation, common sense and an only too ready resort to coarseness on the other.

These two streams met and together formed the New Party, which meant at the ensuing meeting of Congress in 1907 to submerge "Moderation." Nagpur had been chosen at Calcutta for the next venue; but the Central Provinces seemed too favourable to the New Party and at the last moment it was therefore decided to hold the Congress in what was considered a safer place, Surat. Sixteen hundred delegates

¹ As told in an interview to H. W. Nevinson, who in 1907-8 toured India as correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, and in 1908 published his impressions in a volume entitled *The New Spirit in India*.

met together with another five thousand visitors. Excitement was at fever heat as to where the tug-of-war between Left and Right Wings would end. Lajpat Rai, who had just been released, after having been kept interned for six months (without trial),¹ was proposed as President. He refused to supersede Rash Behari Ghose, who had already been put forward by the Right. When that eloquent, if turgid, orator of Bengal, Surendranath Banerjea, rose formally to propose this latter candidate, there were such shouts and disorder, that the meeting was adjourned till the next day. On the morrow the business of installing Rash Behari Ghose in the Chair was allowed to proceed smoothly, but after this Tilak rose on a point of order. The President ruling him twice out of order, the dais was stormed by an angry crowd and a Marathi shoe hit Surendranath Banerjea: the meeting broke up in utter disorder and the police had to clear the hall. On the day following 900 of the 1,600 delegates, the Moderate majority, met again as a "Convention"; appointed a hundred of those present as a Committee for drawing up a Constitution of the Congress (which hitherto had carried on a lusty existence without the luxury of such a one); and resolved that in future only those, ready to submit to it in writing, would be admitted as delegates. The *punctum saliens* is contained in what became Article One of this Constitution and has since been popularly referred to as its "creed." It runs: "The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire, and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means

¹ There had been riots of an agrarian nature in the Punjab in 1907. Six leading barristers were put on their trial for sedition and acquitted. Lajpat Rai was understood to have tampered with the loyalty of soldiers.

by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration, and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit, and developing and organizing the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country."

Thus was "Sawaraj and Swadeshi"—somewhat verbosely, it must be admitted—rendered by the Moderates of Congress, who now remained in sole command of the field. Led by Gokhalé, they included Lajpat Rai, Malaviya, Dinsha Wacha, Pherozeshah Mehta, Surendranath Banerjea—all the old stalwarts; amongst them, inconspicuous at the time, one whom Nevinson¹ describes as "Mr. Motilal Nehru, wealthy Barrister of Allahabad, circumspect and respected, moderate by nature in everything but generosity." . . . And Gokhalé? I cannot forbear to quote here what Lajpat Rai, who himself was very far from being by nature moderate, says about him²: "The noblest and best of the Congress type from the Nationalist point of view was represented by Mr. Gokhalé. With the exception of Dadabhai Naoroji, he was the only Congressman of reputation that lived for his country only and gave his all to her service. He disliked extremely the behaviour of some of the Congress leaders. He often compared the type which found its way into the Congress with those who joined the ranks of the extremists. He admired Arabinda and Har Dayal.³ But he said, "In politics you must consider what is practical and what is unpractical. I would have my country free to-day if that were possible. But is it possible? We are not beggars; we are ambas-

¹ *The New Spirit in India*, p. 256. ² In his *Young India*, p. 228.

³ Har Dayal, born in Delhi in 1884, after two years at Oxford (1905-1907) goes to Paris (in 1908) and San Francisco (in 1911) and works there for the violent overthrow of British rule in India. In 1914 threatened with expulsion from U.S.A., as an undesirable alien, he flees to Switzerland. During 1915-1917 he worked in Berlin as head of the Indian National Party, and escaped to Sweden in 1918, thoroughly disillusioned of both Germany and Turkey. In 1920 he wrote a recantation, *Forty-four Months in Germany and Turkey*, published in London.

sadors of our people at a foreign court, to watch the interests of our country and get as much as we can for her." Nevinson has perhaps left us the best pen-picture of Gokhalé, "whom some were tired of hearing called the Just." He was staying for Divali at the Servants of India Society in Poona (in 1907) and at a dinner, to which many guests had come (not excepting Tilak's lieutenant, N. C. Kelkar), the "inscrutable dispensation of Providence" of the Rule¹ was discussed amid laughter, "but Mr. Gokhalé retained his accustomed serenity. He had written the words with entire seriousness. The dispensations of Providence were inscrutable, but still he believed the British connection was ordained for India's good. Above all it had instilled into the Indian nature a love of freedom and a self-assertion against authority that Indians used to lack. Thus serene, modest, definite in aim and in knowledge, he continued to discourse with us in that refectory, where the Servants of India were gathered around him, until the moon rolled westward." . . .²

THE MINTO-MORLEY REFORMS—AND AFTER

With the Congress thus split and the forces of Swaraj divided, the Bureaucracy could not fail to believe that it had already won half the battle. Its policy—obediently sponsored by Morley—henceforth was to cast to the Moderates some crumbs of comfort, by taking another little step forward; but on the other hand, to repress ruthlessly the Extremists: little realizing, that this futile attempt at terrifying them, would only result in terrorism on the part of the wilder spirits amongst them. Five

¹ "The members of the Servants of India Society frankly accept the British connection, as ordained, in the inscrutable dispensation of Providence, for India's good." (Preamble to Rule, Servants of India Society.)

² Loc. cit., p. 47.

months after the Surat split, a bomb had been thrown at Muzaferpore in Bihar and two Englishwomen were killed. This was made the occasion for getting all inconvenient extremist leaders out of the way: Tilak was deported to Mandalay for as much as six years, Bepin Chandra Pal got off with six months and Aravinda Ghose was even—after a year—acquitted¹; but a Madras “malcontent,” Chidambaran Pillai,² was sentenced to six years and a Moslem extremist, whom we shall encounter again in our narrative, Hasrat Mohani, to one year. Riots in Bombay, consequent upon Tilak’s imprisonment, were put down with a heavy hand. But in 1909 new outrages occurred: a bomb was thrown—unsuccessfully—at the Viceroy, Lord Minto, and at Nasik the Collector was killed; in London an Indian student shot at a crowded meeting Sir W. Curzon Wyllie and Dr. Lalkaka of the India Office.

Before we consider the new Reforms, which were held out to India as an olive branch, it will be necessary to register a further success in the *divide et impera* policy of the Bureaucracy: now that Moderates and Extremists were so happily at loggerheads, the good work was to be consummated by pitting Moslems against Hindus. Sir Bampfylde Fuller, Lieutenant-Governor of the new Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam—the “Moslem” Province!—had already so elegantly expressed the policy envisaged by declaring publicly that he had two wives, one Hindu and one Moslem, but that the Moslem was his favourite³; and on all sides the Moslems were made to feel that

¹ A new warrant against him was issued in 1910; but he evaded it by fleeing to Pondicherry, where he still lives.

² This merchant had had the temerity of forming a *swadeshi* steamship company in Tuticorin to compete with the B.I. Company. Beggared by the cut-throat competition of the latter, Chidambaran had turned to politics for vengeance.

³ Banerjea, *loc. cit.*, p. 218. Sir Henry Cotton (in *India* of October 12, 1906) on the contrary quoted two very apposite sayings of Sir Syad Ahmad: “Mohammedans and Hindus are the two eyes of India”—and “Injure the one and you injure the other.”

they were "the favourite" and that now was the time to peg out their claims, while the Hindu Nationalists were under so heavy a cloud. The Moslem leader who took the cue and organized his community's part was Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk (1837-1907), who since 1863 had been connected with Sir Syad Ahmad in all his endeavours for the educational and general uplift of the Moslem community, and had succeeded him as head of the Aligarh College. It was he who conceived the idea that an All-India Moslem Deputation should wait upon the Viceroy, Lord Minto, as soon as the latter in 1906 had formed a Committee to consider the necessity for further reforms. The Deputation was to formulate the Moslem wishes and as its Leader Mohsin-ul-Mulk put forward a liberal Indian Moslem Prince—H.H. the Aga Khan, head of the Khoja (Ismaili) Sect, a product of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh, and one who stood in high favour with the Government. Born in 1875, he had visited Europe for the first time in 1898; in 1903 he had presided at a Mohammedan Educational Conference in Bombay and demanded the creation of a Moslem University (the idea first conceived by Blunt, when visiting Hyderabad in 1883)¹ and in the same year was nominated a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. The fundamental claim, which the Deputation advanced was one for Moslem *communal* representation, from the Imperial Legislative Council down to the least of the District Boards; a demand, which, if granted, would naturally spike all the guns that democratic representation could put in the field. Lord Minto at once took the opening thus afforded, to declare: "I am entirely in accord with you. I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and

¹ *India under Ripon*, p. 117.

traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent.”¹ Thus the tragic step was taken, to make “personal enfranchisement” in India “the mischievous failure” it was meant to be: and “mischievous failure” it has remained ever since.

Though to others the stage-management of this viceregal reception of the deputation was rather obvious, the Moslems continued on the road, upon which they had so successfully engaged, highly elated at the prospect of getting back into their privileged position of yore. Before the year was out, the Aga Khan launched, again inspired thereto by Mohsin-ul-Mulk, the All-India Moslem League, which was to form the Moslem counterpoise to the Congress: the latter being denounced as a purely Hindu organization. On the model of the Congress, the League met once a year in Christmas Week; in 1906 at Dacca; in 1907 at Karachi; in 1908 at Aligarh, etc. In the latter year—again copying the Congress example—a London branch of the League under Sir Ameer Ali was formed. Amongst the founders of the League were numbered two brothers, who have subsequently made much Indian History: the Ali brothers. Mohamed Ali² (1878-1931) soon became the leader of the Left Wing of the League, but of these developments we can only treat after describing the advent and nature of the Morley-Minto Reforms and the Indian Councils Act of 1909.

The official genesis of these Reforms started with a letter from Morley to Lord Minto in 1906. In 1907 Morley, in his Indian Budget speech in the House of Commons, outlined his scheme; in 1908 he wrote a despatch embodying the project, as finally agreed upon. A Bill was introduced in Parliament in 1909, to give effect to the changes contemplated, and,

¹ *Simon Report*, I, p. 184.

² Educated at Aligarh and Oxford, he joined the educational service, first of Rampur State (1902-1903), and afterwards of Baroda (1904-1910).

supported by all parties in the House, it was passed as an agreed measure. The Act was immediately put in operation in India, and in January 1910 the first reformed Legislatures met. The essence of these Morleyan "Reforms" lay in conceding, what at once was evacuated of all meaning. Thus the elective principle of democracy was adopted: yet at the same time the anti-democratic communal representation was added. The official majority was done away with: but the elected members remained in a minority. The membership was considerably enlarged: but an emphatic disclaimer was issued simultaneously that the new Councils in no way meant the introduction of a parliamentary system.¹ The Council of India and even the Viceroy's Executive Council were opened to some very few and very select Indians: but the liberal aspect of admitting Indians to the *arcana* of government could in no way disguise the fact that real power remained safely in British hands. The great apostle of "Compromise" had indeed achieved a compromising triumph! But "the reforms attributed to Mr. Morley," said that old Indian civilian, C. J. O'Donnell, in 1908,² "are really the work of the Secretaries and others, whom Lord Curzon placed in the highest offices at Simla."

Pradhan³ sums up these Reforms as transferring "not even the smallest measure of responsibility to the Indian people; they created no electorates, except in the case of the Mohammedans, and gave no political training to the masses. By a system of disqualifications⁴ they excluded the Extremists from the Councils with the result that this large party found no

¹ "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it." Lord Morley in the House of Lords, December 17, 1908.

² In *The Causes of Present Discontents in India*, p. 10.

³ Loc. cit., p. 110.

⁴ The election of a man like N. C. Kelkar, for instance, was disallowed, because "his antecedents and reputation render his election contrary to public interest!"

representation whatever." The Congress in 1908 (at Madras), in full reaction against the Extremists' tactics at Surat the year before had expressed "its deep and general satisfaction at the Reform proposals formulated in Lord Morley's despatch"; but in the following year already (1909, Lahore) "placed on record its strong sense of disapproval of the creation of separate electorates" and of the Regulations which "have caused widespread dissatisfaction."

In the very year that the Reformed Councils started functioning, Lord Morley retired from the India Office, being succeeded there by Lord Crewe; Lord Hardinge was appointed to succeed Lord Minto as Viceroy; King Edward VII died and it was decided that the new King-Emperor, George V, should in 1911 visit India in person and hold a *darbar* at Delhi. That year was a momentous one for India: the great "settled fact" was unsettled after all and the declaration that Bengal would be reunited, came this time from the mouth of the King-Emperor himself. Thus was healed the running sore which had poisoned the life of India for so long. In the same Declaration, Delhi was henceforth made the new Capital of India, which would both be removed from the daily influence of the British Plan-tation of Calcutta, and demonstrate a desire to rule India for the benefit of India as a truly Indian Government, and not, for the exclusive interest of England, as merely a subordinate British Government.

With Lord Hardinge a new spirit seemed to have come over the scene. Born in 1858, Lord Hardinge from the age of 22 had been in the Foreign Office service¹ and therefore brought to his high office in India an open mind and a very different outlook from that of the Indian bureaucracy, whose tendency is to

¹ 1896, Secretary of Legation, Teheran; 1898, Secretary of Embassy, St. Petersburg; 1903, Assistant Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs; 1904-1906, Ambassador to Russia; 1906-1910, Permanent Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, to which post he reverted on his return from India. From 1920-1922 he was Ambassador to France.

expect their instructions to be carried out, where a diplomat like Lord Hardinge would expect to reach an agreement. The Congress, held at Allahabad in 1910, drew up an address of welcome to the new Viceroy, and the President of the Congress, Sir William Wedderburn, noted on that occasion with an emotion shared by all, that "this was the first time that the Congress was to be received in friendly personal recognition by a Viceroy." Such was Lord Hardinge, such his understanding of and sympathy with Indian sentiment and aspirations.

Another novel point in Indo-British relations had been reached by and under Lord Hardinge through the far-reaching fact that the Anglo-Russian *entente*, in the achievement of which Lord Hardinge played such a vital part, not only relieved the British Government in India of its nightmare of a Russian invasion on the North-Western Frontier, but also had a distinctly cooling effect on the fervour of Indian Moslem enthusiasm for the British, who had been considered the traditional friends of Turkey against Russia. Symptomatic of this new restiveness was the Red Crescent Mission, which Indian Moslems in 1912 sent to Turkey during the First Balkan War (1912-1913). Lord Crewe persisted in declaring in the House of Lords (in 1912) that he saw no future for India on the lines of Dominion self-government and he repudiated such a meaning which had been read into a despatch of Lord Hardinge's, which had seemed to foreshadow provincial autonomy and ever-widening self-government.¹ But Lord Hardinge persevered, and was most successful, in his role as peacemaker—though he had to suffer for the sins of his predecessors. When in December 1912 he made his state entry into the new capital, Delhi, a miscreant threw a bomb at him which wounded him seriously; but, covered with blood, as he was, he turned to his companion in the carriage with the historic words: "No change, in any case—you understand? No change whatever in

¹ Pradhan, loc. cit., p. 116.

our policy!" And no change was made; on the contrary, by his identification in 1913 of the Indian Government with the Indian people in their attitude towards the Union Government over the question of the Indians in South Africa, he opened a new chapter in Indo-British relations: and if the chapter was short, it was not his fault, true gentleman and great Englishman that he was.

The year 1911 was a momentous one, not least because it was ushered in by a Hindu-Moslem Conference attended by such men as Wedderburn, Banerjea, Malaviya, Rahimtullah, Hassan Imam and Jinnah, whose object it was to bring about that Hindu-Moslem unity, without which the dream of Swaraj must ever remain—a dream. Sir William Wedderburn had specially come from England to preside over the Congress at Allahabad in 1910, in order to remove the official wedge so astutely driven between Hindus and Moslems, and also, if possible, to heal the breach made at Surat between Moderates and Extremists. After the Congress, the Conference was held, which greatly alarmed the Bureaucracy. An Anglo-Indian paper indeed blurted it out: "Why do these men want to unite the two communities, if it is not to unite them against the Government?" Mahomed Ali had started (in 1910) on his journalistic career, by launching *The Comrade* in Calcutta, and in it he urged the Moslem League to get out of its groove of communalism and loyalism. The wing he led soon prevailed in the League and at its meeting in 1913, at Lucknow, its "creed" was altered and henceforth the aim of the League was "the attainment of self-government for India along with the other communities." The Congress held at Karachi that year under the presidency of a Moslem notable, Nawab Syed Muhammad Bahadur, at once replied, availing itself of the opening thus afforded, to the effect that it "warmly appreciated the adoption by the All-India Moslem League of the ideal of self-government for India within the British Empire";

expressed "its complete accord with the belief, which the League has so emphatically declared at its last sessions, that the political future of the country depends on the harmonious working and cooperation of the various communities in the country"; and "most heartily welcomed the hope expressed by the League that the leaders of the different communities will make every endeavour to find a *modus operandi* for joint and concerted action on all questions of national good."

This was the mandate which eventually, three years later, resulted in the famous "Pact" between Hindus and Moslems, which was further to entrench the principle of communal representation in Indian politics. On the other hand, the whole trend of League and Congress took a distinct tilt to the Left, so much so that the Aga Khan for instance dissociated himself from the League, which had ceased to be sufficiently "loyal" for him. Other factors made for renewed leaning of Extremist elements towards Congress—the grievance of the Partition of Bengal had been redressed, Lord Hardinge was instilling hope for the future and renewed faith in England: and greater charity towards fellow-Indians of other schools of thought was the natural result. But two personalities precipitated it: Mrs. Besant who in 1913 suddenly had entered the political arena, and Tilak, who in 1914 had completed his six years' banishment to Mandalay. On the other hand, the removal by death of two great National Leaders—Pherozeshah Mehta and above all, Gokhalé—deprived unfortunately this tendency of the guidance and statesmanship which were supremely needed at that critical moment.

Above all, there was—the War, which, declared on August 4, 1914 by England, had automatically drawn India into its maelstrom.

CHAPTER III

THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT: SECOND PERIOD

(1914-1930)

THE WAR AND POLITICAL CONCENTRATION

It would be idle to speculate, what would have happened in India if the War had broken out five years earlier. It is certain in any case that the whole-hearted way in which India ranged herself at England's side against Germany was very largely the product of Lord Hardinge's wise and sympathetic viceroyalty. It was Lord Hardinge again who now insisted on Indian troops being sent, not as auxiliaries, nor into zones of minor strategic importance, but as the complete equals of their European comrades into breaches on the Western Front, on the holding of which, then and there, the outcome of the War itself depended. In 1824 Canning, by recognizing the independence of Argentina, had "called in the New World to redress the balance of the Old": less than a century later, Lord Hardinge, by acknowledging India as a peer among peers in the comity of the World's Nations, called in the East to redress the balance of the West. Because it was Lord Hardinge who declared its passage to be indispensable for the pursuit of the War, the Imperial Legislative Council of India passed without a murmur a Defence of India Act so drastic, that a tithe of it would under other circumstances have sufficed to create a storm of opposition. With perfect grace India consented to a free gift of a hundred million pounds towards England's war expenditure and in a hundred other ways made a "war effort," which, particularly in the early days of the War, was perhaps the most valuable rendered to England at the time.

This somewhat unexpected unanimity of Indian loyalty of

course had in it a considerable element of *Realpolitik*. With great bluntness Pradhan¹ observes that "in the politically minded classes very few fully believed in the sincerity of the sentiments expressed by British statesmen as regards the character and objects of the War." But "a reasoned consideration of the whole situation decided them to take the declarations of British statesmen at their face value, and, when the time came, use them as additional arguments for pressing the claims of India to self-government." Asquith, as British Prime Minister, had acknowledged that in future Indian questions must be approached from "a new angle of vision": and the subsequent solemn declaration of the Allies, as to every people's inalienable right to self-determination, amply bore out the meaning which India had at once read into the Premier's words. Even a question, like the condition of Indians abroad, especially in South Africa, which for some years already had more and more agitated public opinion in India and to which we shall presently have to revert, had been understood to be likely to receive a happy solution through the War, inasmuch as German East Africa was to become an Indian Colony. Mr. Gandhi, leader of the South African Indians, was in London just at the outbreak of the War, and he too was quite content to return to his native India and there to do his part in helping England to win the War. Once more, as in Lord Ripon's time, as at Morley's advent at the India Office; for the third and last time, India *trusted* England.

In the meantime India herself was putting her house in order, by composing the differences both between Moderates and Extremists, and between Hindus and Moslems.

As regards the former point, we have already said that Mrs. Besant took a leading part in it. During all the stirring years of the Anti-Partition agitation she had stood studiously apart from all political movements. Mrs. Besant was dead

¹ Loc. cit., p. 124.

against all that idea of independence from England which the Nationalists of Bengal had espoused. As for *swadeshi*, she would not oppose it, if it was economic, and not political; similarly, she wanted "national education" because of the spiritual superiority of Hinduism, but not because, as a political weapon, Government schools were to be boycotted. On the contrary, she did everything to get Government support, moral and financial, for her Central Hindu College, that apple of her eye—she cultivated Lord Minto and tried to get the Prince of Wales in 1906 to visit it. In 1907 she had become head of the Theosophical Society and between 1908 and 1913 had consequently often to visit England. There the "Suffragette" struggle for Women's political rights left its deep impress upon her; in India her position in Orthodox Hindu circles had been greatly shaken over the Leadbeater scandals and the Krishnamurti affair. Whatever the reason, on her return from her last visit to England in 1913, she threw herself openly and for the first time into Indian politics. Redmond's Home Rule League suggested to her a similar movement for India. Her plan was to disentangle the nationalist Extremists from their compromising alliance with the Revolutionaries, to reconcile them to a position within the British Empire, and to bring them with the Moderates into line in a reunited Congress. For this purpose she started (in January 1914) a weekly, *Commonweal*; six months later she bought a Madras daily, which she renamed *New India*; and before the year was out she could, at Madras, take her seat on the Congress platform as a recognized leader. She proposed indeed—and failed to carry—an amendment to Rule 20 of the Congress Constitution which would have made it possible for those aloof from Congress since 1908 to rejoin at once; but she did carry another amendment, whereby associations, which on December 31, 1915, would have been in being for at least two years and which had as one of their objects the attainment by con-

stitutional means of self-government by India on Colonial lines, within the British Empire, would be entitled to send delegates to the Congress of 1916.

Long before—even before the Congress of 1915 could meet—on February 19, 1915—the greatest figure in Congress, Gokhalé, died. Only a few months previously, Lord Willingdon, then Governor of Bombay, to-day Viceroy of India, had asked him to embody his ideas for further political reforms in a memorandum, which subsequently was published (in 1917, by his colleague on the Imperial Legislative Council, the Aga Khan) under the name of “Mr. Gokhalé’s Political Testament.”¹ It is very far indeed from being anything of the sort; it contains neither enunciation nor application of any principles and is, in fact, simply the draft of a rough sketch of reforms, which he thought necessary on the outbreak of the War, if England wanted to rally Indian public opinion to her side. It is indeed melancholy to think, that what he had considered merely an immediate first instalment in 1914, became—five years later!—the substance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, which in England were deemed sufficient advance to last India for at least another decade. One could weep, when one ponders the waste of so much exquisite material—rare anywhere: the keen intelligence, the sterling moral worth, the ripe judgment, the proved statesmanship, the grasp of public affairs, both in their essentials and details, the drive of the personality, the graciousness of manner, of a Gokhalé: when one thinks what such a one could have achieved, not only for India, but equally for England and the World, had he not been member of a subject-race. There is a Nemesis—of course; but alas! that it should have to come into play at all!—the Nemesis of all alien rule: that it is always “too late in its reforms.”² . . .

¹ It has been included in *Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhalé* (on p. 1025 of the 3rd ed., Madras, 1920).

² The closing words of Blunt’s *India under Ripon*.

Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, strangely enough, died in the same year as Gokhalé, only nine months later than he: and with him went the last of the old Moderate leaders. Pre-War India was passing, and the field was now free for that strangely assorted pair, Mrs. Besant and Tilak. The former, with that amazing energy of hers, throughout the whole of 1915, engaged upon a whirlwind campaign of Home Rule propaganda, and at the Congress held at Bombay that year under the presidency of Sir S. P. Sinha proposed the launching of a Home Rule League. The Congress did not see the force of creating a new organization, but temporized and Mrs. Besant agreed to hold her hand for nine months so as to give the Congress time for second thoughts on the subject. In Western India Joseph Baptista, presiding at a Provincial Conference in Poona, similarly pressed in 1915 for the formation of a Home Rule League. As soon as the Congress time-limit was up, Mrs. Besant started her Home Rule League as an organization distinct from Congress. It spread in Madras Presidency like wildfire from district to district, whilst the Maharashtra Home Rule League, started by Baptista and endorsed by Tilak, soon covered Bombay Presidency.

The Extremists thus had an organization of their own; but their aim, of course, was to capture the Congress itself. The 1914 amendment to the Rules having by this time come into force, the Congress, which met in 1916 at Lucknow, represented all shades and schools of political thought, and, since Calcutta in 1906, was thus the first reunited Congress—and the last one too, as we shall soon see. Meantime, at the Lucknow Congress, says Bepin Chandra Pal¹, “Mrs. Besant was almost unanimously accepted as one of the most influential leaders of the new political life and thought in the country.” Tilak, of course, re-entering at Lucknow the Congress scene for the first time since the Surat session, was received with signal demonstrations. To

¹ *Mrs. Besant: a Psychological Study*, Madras, 1917, p. 701.

control of Unbelievers? Mohammed Ali, who had never got reconciled to a war against Turkey, had in 1915 already been interned: but Moslem misgivings in general could not be stifled so easily.

Yet out of that war against Turkey there came something which with one dramatic stroke enlightened English opinion on the merits of the Bureaucracy's absolutist régime in India and made a responsible dominion government of India seem no longer a Utopian dream of perfection: I mean the publication in May 1917 of the Parliamentary Mesopotamia Commission's Report.

At this point it must be explained that the disastrous Mesopotamian campaign, from Turkey's entry into the War (November 5, 1914) up to and beyond the fall of Kut (April 29, 1915), was a military expedition carried on entirely by the Government of India and its army; and that it was not until February 1916 that the British War Office assumed control of the operations. Not only, however, was the campaign disastrous; not only was it carried on with a degree of military ineptitude which makes sorry reading; worst of all, it was conducted with a totally insufficient regard for the medical needs of the forces employed and with an absolute lack of provision for their comforts in general. The facts naturally leaked out and deservedly roused a burning indignation in England, as a result of which Parliament appointed in 1916 a Mesopotamia Commission, which in May of the following year submitted a report¹ which only confirmed the worst rumours and suspicions. But what incidentally also came out was the fact—and for our purpose this is of real moment—that that wonderful system of government in India, which amongst the British general public had hitherto been believed to be above any possible question of inefficiency, was proved to have failed, and to have failed utterly—not, because it had been hampered

¹ Command Paper 8610 of 1917.

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¹ Command Paper 8610 of 1917.

or interfered with or otherwise thwarted, but on the contrary, because it had had complete *carte blanche* to do or not to do, what in its own wisdom seemed good. The system itself was found to have been quite unsound: the old myth that only the "silent, strong man on the spot" (British, of course) could effectively get things done "east of Suez," had been shattered.

The Mesopotamia Commission's Report spoke of "the centralization of all authority in one man's hands" and of the selection of Simla, "a hill-top in the Himalayas," as the "singularly unsuitable residence of the one high official, who has to discharge this unique mass of responsibilities," as an "idea grotesque in its nakedness." "The Indian Government's military system of administration," the Commissioners continued, "was cumbrous and inept; it was, however, within the power of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief to have established a more effective procedure." Instead of using that power, however, "the failure to minister to the wants of the forces employed in Mesopotamia was persistent and continuous." "Bombay, Calcutta, London were all cognizant of what was going on: Simla and Delhi alone were unmoved." Not only ignorant, but obstinate in its ignorance, the Bureaucracy, owing to its "intense isolation and centralization," went on from failure to failure. And lest it be thought that this failure, colossal though it was, were but the result of some unique war-time circumstances, there were witnesses like Sir Havelock Charles, Surgeon-General MacNeece and Sir William Babbie, who spoke to the current results of that bureaucratic system in peace time in such terms, as that "the Sepoys' hospitals are so bad that it would be necessary to reform them *ab initio*," that "they are a disgrace to the Government of India," that "I doubt whether you gentlemen would consider the Sepoys' hospitals in peace time in India hospitals at all." In peace time and in India itself! Is it a wonder that one of the commissioners, Mr. Josiah C. Wedgwood, should have closed his

minority report with the words: "My last recommendation is that we should no longer deny to Indians the full privileges of citizenship, but should allow them a large share in the government of their own country and in the control of that Bureaucracy which in this War, uncontrolled by public opinion, has failed to rise to British standards"? Is it a wonder that this sentiment was widely shared in England, once the failure of the Indian government system had been so poignantly brought home to multitudes of British people? The facts are that in May 1917 the White Paper quoted was published; that in July 1917 the Secretary of State for India, Sir Austen Chamberlain, had to resign on the report of this Mesopotamian Commission; that he was succeeded by E. S. Montagu; and that the latter, on August 20, 1917, announced in the House of Commons the Government's new policy with regard to India.

THE WAR AND POLITICAL DISRUPTION

Edwin Samuel Montagu (1879-1924) had been Morley's Under-Secretary of State and had continued in that appointment until 1914. He was Minister of Munitions, when Mr. Lloyd George asked him to take charge at the India Office and he held the latter post for five strenuous years. Typically English though he was in so many ways, India had for him been a matter of love at first sight: to her he had given his heart, and her betrayal by England broke it.

The salient words of the declaration he made in the House of Commons on August 20, 1917, are undoubtedly those which speak of "the progressive realization of Responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire": for in them is for the first time officially acknowledged that India's political goal is Responsible Government; and for the first time also England pledges herself to take "substantial steps in this

direction." The "moon" of Morley's dictum had come within India's grasp, after all; and "Canada's furs" from the new "angle of vision" could no longer be descried. Still, the Declaration was so hedged about with words of caution and safeguarding, that it could not give entire satisfaction to an India, which had been kept expectant far too long. But it came as a general relief all the same and managed "to keep India quiet" during the most critical time of the War. To follow up this result and to work out on the spot, in consultation both with Indian leaders and Anglo-Indian officialdom, a scheme of Reforms, which would implement the Declaration, the new Secretary of State took the unprecedented step of visiting India in person—from November 1917 to May 1918.

When one considers the gravity of the epoch and the momentousness of the Reform contemplated, the thing that must strike one most in contemplating India of the time, is the effect all this had on the Bureaucracy. They were indeed dumbfounded and afterwards highly agitated: but only because the knotty problem had to be solved, whether the Secretary of State was to take precedence over his subordinate, the Viceroy; or whether the representative of the King's Majesty was to walk before that of a visiting Commoner! To those that care for omens it will certainly not escape that in the end it was the latter solution of the "problem" that won the day. The thing that alarmed Montagu more than anything else throughout his sojourn in India, was that, from Lord Chelmsford down, reform had so little sunk into the minds of the Bureaucracy that they all seemed to think that everything would go on as before. In his diary the exasperated Secretary of State might well explode: "I wish I could get the damned Bureaucracy to realize that we are sitting on an earthquake."¹

Mrs. Besant, who before the August Declaration had with two

¹ *An Indian Diary*, by Edwin S. Montagu. Edited by Venetia Montagu, London, 1930, p. 77.

other Theosophists, Wadia and Arundale, been interned, and before Montagu's arrival in India had been released, was President-designate of Congress for its meeting at Calcutta in Christmas Week, 1917. A month before she and Tilak went up to Delhi and invited Montagu to attend the session: a proposal which scandalized the Bureaucracy quite as much as the spectacle of the Secretary of State allowing himself to be garlanded by an Extremist like Tilak. Montagu longed of course, "to dash down to the Congress and make them a great oration; it might save the whole situation. But I am prevented from doing this," he writes. He was prevented from doing most things, alas! A week before the Congress met, Mrs. Besant once more saw him and said, she would accept any scheme, provided it led within a short time and automatically to complete Home Rule; and Montagu agreed that this test should be put to any scheme produced. But then she wanted the power of the purse—and this Montagu could not concede. A few days later he saw Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Gokhalé's successor, who summed up his demands as elements and guarantee of progress in the scheme itself; the step must be substantial and not hedged round by humiliating stipulations as to fitness; fiscal liberty; equality between races.¹ The men who thought like him, the Moderates, were not people who relished ultimatums and flamboyant language. Though there seemed little to choose between their ultimate aims and those of the Extremists, their temperamental outlook was different. They were men, apt to count the cost before paying it; men who frankly believed that India could not jump overnight into complete Home Rule, but would need British help and cooperation for some time more. They wanted reforms, not revolution; they cherished Freedom, but no less Order. The demagogy of Mrs. Besant and Tilak repelled them; and they refused to place themselves in front of the triumphal chariot on which Mrs. Besant was to ride into

¹ *An Indian Diary*, p. 122

the Presidency of Congress. Thus they stayed away from the annual session of Congress, held at Calcutta in 1917: and the Left Wing, without battle, found itself in sole possession of the great organization from which, ten years previously, they had been excluded.

Thus ended 1917: whilst 1918 was almost ushered in by Woodrow Wilson's gallant attempt to render the world—in fourteen points—safe for democracy. To suit acts to words, the United States was passing a Philippine Autonomy Act, the preamble of which read: "Whereas it is, as it has always been, the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands, and to recognize their independence, as soon as a stable Government can be established therein," etc. This was very different an ideal from that of a divinely ordained connection between England and India in a common Empire, the terms of which were to be brought in consonance with changed times, but which itself nobody really wished to put a term to. Montagu, of course, had not only to think of what would constitute a proper and adequate reform in this sense, but also how much of it he could make acceptable to the Indian political leaders, to Lord Chelmsford and his bureaucracy and to the War Cabinet at Home, which included men like Lord Curzon, Balfour and Bonar Law. It was almost like trying to square the circle—but throughout his plans he kept steadfastly two main principles in view: (1) all advance towards self-government must attach responsibility to the Indians for the votes they give and the speeches they make; (2) it is far better to use honest than dishonest devices, and not to give with one hand and take away with the other.¹ In the diary from which I have just quoted and which, I think, will form one of the most important source-books of Indian History of the time, one can follow the tremendous energy, shrewdness and sympathy with which Montagu

¹ *An Indian Diary*, p. 102.

worked away at his difficult problem. There was delay after delay, but in the end a report, to which both he and Lord Chelmsford could affix their signatures, was evolved and signed; Montagu sailed for England, where he arrived in May, and in July 1918 the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was placed on the table of Parliament.

The Report, which Sir Valentine Chirol¹ has called "the first authoritative survey of the state of India since the Mutiny," was remarkable for the democratic ideal of a *principatus politicus* which inspired it. After a generation of *principatus dominativus*, which had accepted as axiomatic all the wildest jingo dreams of Imperialism, this British State document for the first time hearkened back to the Liberal statesmanship of pre-Mutiny years and once more spoke the language of a Lord Ripon. "Our obligations to the politically minded portion of the people of India are plain, for they are intellectually our children," says the Report. "The present intellectual and moral stir in India is no reproach, but rather a tribute to our work. The educated Indian has seized the education which we offered him; and if he has followed too exclusively after the law, journalism or school teaching, we must take note, how far the past policy of Government is responsible. The educated Indian is a creation peculiarly of our own; and if we take the credit that is due to us for his strong points, we must admit a similar liability for his weak ones. We owe him sympathy because he has conceived and pursued the idea of managing his own affairs, an aim which no Englishman can fail to respect." In a second part of the Report a scheme was adumbrated of giving practical effect to a fourfold Reform: (1) local bodies should be completely under popular control; (2) responsibility should be introduced in the Provincial Councils; (3) at the centre only further opportunities of influencing Government should be provided, without actual responsibility; (4) the con-

¹ *India Old and New*, p. 151.

trol of Parliament and of the Secretary of State over the Indian Governments should be increasingly relaxed. As for communal representation, it was submitted to an acute critical analysis and its anti-democratic nature and consequences were left in no doubt: yet, since it existed, it would be impossible to suppress it now and perhaps even, the Report sadly opined, the evil system might have to be extended to the Sikhs.

The Report was at once met on its publication by a *non possumus* from Mrs. Besant, who pronounced the Reform adumbrated as being "unworthy of England to offer and of India to accept it." Tilak characterized it as "unsatisfactory and disappointing" and started a violent agitation, determined that India should stand firm by the Congress League Scheme as an irreducible minimum. The Congress was convened in special session at Bombay to express itself in this sense. The Moderates besought the Congress leaders to stay their hand and not wilfully to precipitate a crisis. Anglo-India was not less fiercely opposed to the new scheme of Reform, than the Indian Nationalists were: taken between these two forms of intransigence the whole thing seemed likely to be crushed out of existence and nothing would remain but a clash that might lead to a general break-up. This, the Moderates felt, they must prevent at all costs, and thus, against Right and Left, they rallied to the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals, not because they considered them ideal, but because half a loaf is better than none. They would send a deputation to London, to influence the Parliamentary Committee which was to consider the Report, and would improve as far as possible the Bill to be introduced in Parliament; they most decidedly would lend no hand to mere wrecking tactics. Thus they did not attend the Emergency Congress in Bombay; on the contrary, they met in November in a Conference of their own at Bombay and constituted themselves as an organization distinct from the Congress as the Indian National Liberal Federation.

Thus, just as the War was drawing to a close and almost synchronous with the Armistice of November 11, 1918, the union of all the Indian political parties which had been worked for and achieved during the first part of the War, was undone by a counter-tendency, which had developed during the latter half of it. But whilst in pre-War India it was the Moderate Party, which had been predominant, in post-War India, under its new title of Liberal Party, it had become a minority section, which more and more was elbowed out of importance by the parties which gathered together in a revolutionized Congress under the new leadership of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

ENTERS MR. GANDHI

Mr. Gandhi had made his first bow to the political public of India in 1896, when he made a short sojourn in his own country. He saw in Bombay Tyabjee, Ranadé and Pherozeshah Mehta, and the latter presided at a public meeting called by Mr. Gandhi to protest against the disabilities suffered by Indians in South Africa. In Poona, a similar meeting was held under the presidency of Ramkrishna Bhandarkar, with the concurrence of both Tilak and Gokhalé. Their first meeting Gandhiji records as follows¹: "Sir Pherozeshah had seemed to me like the Himalaya—unscalable; the Lokamanya like the Ocean—and one could not easily launch forth on the sea. But Gokhalé was as the Ganges—it invited one to its bosom." He adds: "In the sphere of politics the place that Gokhalé occupied in my heart during his life-time and occupies even now has been and is absolutely unique." And Gokhalé on his part has left us a record of what impression he received. "In all my life," he says, "I have known only two men who have affected me

¹ *My Experiments with Truth*, I, p. 416.

spiritually in the manner that Mr. Gandhi does—our great patriarch, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, and my late master Mr. Ranadé—men before whom not only are we ashamed of doing anything unworthy, but in whose presence our very minds are afraid of thinking anything that is unworthy.”¹

The Congress, since 1895, had passed resolutions of protest against the disabilities imposed upon Indian Settlers in South Africa: it was therefore only natural, that, when Mr. Gandhi was in India again, in 1901, he not only should have attended Congress (his first experience) but should have been entrusted by Gokhalé to move a similar resolution. Sir Dinsha Wacha was President at Calcutta and him also Mr. Gandhi knew already, as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta’s lieutenant five years previously: but it was a most perfunctory business, as the speaker had only a couple of minutes allotted him. After the Congress was over, Mr. Gandhi stayed for over a month with Gokhalé in Calcutta. The next time he met him was in South Africa, in October 1912. It was Mr. Gandhi who had urged him all along to come and see things for himself and, as we have already seen, the India Office did eventually fall in with this suggestion. Gokhalé stayed in South Africa for six weeks and on his way back Mr. Gandhi accompanied him as far as Zanzibar. “On the steamer we had ample time to talk to our heart’s content. In these conversations Gokhalé prepared me for India. He analysed for me the characters of all the leaders in India, and his analysis was so accurate, that I have hardly perceived any difference between Gokhalé’s estimate and my own personal experience of them.”² When Mr. Gandhi was saying finally goodbye to Africa in 1914, Gokhalé, who was in London at the time, asked him to go home via England. He did so, got pleurisy, while in England, and only reached Bombay late in 1914. In his own words, “I approached India in the ardent

¹ Gokhalé in the *Natesan Series*, Madras, 1927, p. 45.

² *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 409.

hope of merging myself in Gokhalé.”¹ At Poona Gokhalé had gathered all the members of the Servants of India Society to meet him. Gokhalé was very keen that he should join the Society, and so was Mr. Gandhi; “but the members felt that there was a great difference between my ideals and methods of work, and theirs.” Gokhalé told him that, “whether you are formally admitted as a member or not, I am going to look upon you as one.” As a matter of fact Gokhalé looked upon him, not only as a member, but as his successor. In the meantime, the remaining Indian members of Mr. Gandhi’s Tolstoy Farm and Phoenix Settlement had come to India and were being put up for the time being at Tagore’s Shantiniketan; but Mr. Gandhi wanted to have them in an *ashram* of his own, if possible in Gujarat. Gokhalé not only agreed, but said: “You must look to me for the expenses of the *ashram* which I will regard as my own.”² And so it was done. One more thing Gokhalé asked of Mr. Gandhi and that was, to travel in India for a year, before expressing opinions on public questions. Gokhalé gave a farewell party to Mr. Gandhi—who was to go to Shantiniketan to fetch his Phoenix Party—and that was the last that the latter ever saw of him. Less than a fortnight later, a telegram told him that Gokhalé had died on February 19th.

“Launching on the stormy sea of Indian public life,” Mr. Gandhi poignantly tells us³: “I was in need of a sure pilot. I had had one in Gokhalé and had felt secure in his keeping. Now that he was gone, I was thrown on my own resources.” As Mr. Gandhi thought it would be in accordance with Mr. Gokhalé’s wishes, he applied for admission to Gokhalé’s Society then and there. He even tried to “woo” those members who were opposed to his admission and who feared that the Society would cease to be what it was intended to be and what it was, if Mr. Gandhi was admitted. In the end he came to the con-

¹ *My Experiments with Truth*, II, p. 256.

² *Ibid.*, p. 289.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

clusion that, rather than join on a mere majority vote, he would prove his loyalty to Gokhalé and to his Society best by the withdrawal of his application for membership. "This withdrawal," he adds quaintly, "has made me truly a member of the Society." Probably the decision of agreeing to differ—and to separate—was inevitable under the circumstances; but one cannot help feeling, what a wonderful future there would have opened for both, if Gokhalé's life had been spared—after all, Gokhalé was only the senior of Mr. Gandhi by three years! And if Gokhalé could have carried out his plan of integrating the *ashram* of Mr. Gandhi's planning into his Servants of India Society, assuredly India's history for the next decade would have run along other channels.

As it was, Mr. Gandhi settled upon Ahmedabad, the capital of his own Gujarat, as the most suitable place where to found his *ashram*, shrewdly taking into account "the monetary help from its wealthy citizens." A bungalow was accordingly rented in Kochrab, a small village near Ahmedabad, and on May 25, 1915, the repatriates from South Africa, twenty-five men and women in all, settled down to their common life in what Mr. Gandhi from the start called their Satyagrahashram—a title conveying both our goal and our method of service." For "I wanted to acquaint India with the method I had tried in South Africa, and I desired to test in India the extent to which its application might be possible."¹ It was in this attitude of the inventor and experimenter that Mr. Gandhi founded the *ashram* and it is only from this point of view that all his subsequent activities become understandable. Mr. Gandhi was spoiling, not for a fight, but for an experiment. The only new development since consists in the fact that, whilst in 1906² he

¹ *My Experiments with Truth*, II, p. 335.

² Satyagraha may be said to have been born at a public meeting in Johannesburg in September 11, 1906, when the Satyagraha Pledge was first taken—against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance gazetted a month previously.

believes to have discovered a new method in politics, Satyagraha, he added to it in 1919 a new method in economics, *Khadi*. To complete the story of the *ashram* itself, I would add here, that in 1917, on account of an outbreak of plague there, the temporary bungalow at Kochrab was given up and a permanent home founded on twenty acres of land, purchased on the outskirts of Ahmedabad. "Its vicinity to the Sabarmati Central Jail was for me a special attraction, as jail-going was understood to be the normal lot of Satyagrahis," explains Mr. Gandhi cheerfully.

Five times already Mr. Gandhi had been able to conduct an experiment of Satyagraha in India, before the dawn of 1919, the year where we have had to interrupt our narrative, in order to explain the emergence of this new factor in Indian politics. He enumerates these five occasions in the Preface to his already quoted *Satyagraha in South Africa*. The first occasion was in 1915, almost immediately on his arrival from England. It was in Rajkot and he was asked to help the people, as the Customs cordon at Viramgam (against some Principalities) was a great burden for them. Mr Gandhi started correspondence with Government and intimated that the people were ready to offer Satyagraha; he saw the Viceroy (Lord Chelmsford) and the latter prudently abolished the customs line, before Mr. Gandhi could proceed to the actual "experiment." The second occasion was similarly of a minatory nature only and concerned the abolition in 1917 of the system of the emigration of indentured labourers from India. The public agitation was considerable, but "here too," acknowledges Mr. Gandhi, "success came merely through preparedness for Satyagraha." Once more Lord Chelmsford stepped in and acceded to the popular demand. The third occasion came through an enquiry Mr. Gandhi had been asked by leading people in Bihar to make into agrarian grievances at Champaran in connection with the European indigo planters there. It was

a matter entirely after Gandhiji's heart: non-political, it concerned the grinding of the faces of poor, ignorant peasants. By his enquiries amongst them, full of love and understanding, and by his attitude to the officials, kind, polite, but oh, so firm! a new spirit seemed to have come over all. The authority of the white man had been shaken to its very foundations. "The people had lost all fear of punishment and yielded obedience to the power of love which their new friend exercised."¹ The Commissioner, thoroughly frightened and pressed by the planters, served Mr. Gandhi with an order to quit the district. Mr. Gandhi, sweetly disobedient, intimated that he could not comply with the order, "not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience." He was charged and appeared before the local Magistrate, who, nonplussed, wished to postpone the case. Mr. Gandhi demurred, as he wished to plead guilty! In the meantime the Lieut.-Governor of the Province had wired to stop the case: and the Collector informed Mr. Gandhi that he was quite at liberty to continue his enquiry. Thus "the country had its first direct object lesson in Civil Disobedience, as the affair was freely discussed both locally and in the Press." In the event the Bihar Legislative Council (in March 1918) passed an Agrarian Bill in satisfaction of the grievances, which Mr. Gandhi had exposed at Champoran. Thus his victory was complete.²

¹ The first impression Mr. Gandhi made on E. S. Montagu (November 1917) is interesting in this connection. "... saw the renowned Gandhi. He is a social reformer; he has a real desire to find grievances and to cure them, not for any reasons of self-advertisement, but to improve the conditions of his fellow-men. He is the real hero of the settlement of the Indian question in South Africa, where he suffered imprisonment. He has just been helping the Government to find a solution for the grievances of the indigo labour in Bihar. He dresses like a coolie, forswears all personal advancement, lives practically on the air, and is a pure visionary." (*Indian Diary*, p. 58.)

² *My Experiments with Truth*, II, p. 373.

The fourth occasion (March 1918) was to put Mr. Gandhi in touch with industrial labour. The mill-hands at Ahmedabad were grossly underpaid and appealed to Mr. Gandhi. The latter asked the mill-owners (all Indians and some of them his close friends) to submit the case to arbitration. The employers refused as much as to look at the introduction of so dangerous a principle: whereupon Mr. Gandhi advised the labourers to go on strike, or rather resort to Satyagraha. The strike came off right enough, but the Satyagraha was not exactly perfect. To neutralize the tendency to rowdiness and "purify" the struggle, Mr. Gandhi decided to abstain from all food, until things were satisfactorily settled. This brought the employers quickly round, as the last thing they wished to risk was Mr. Gandhi's death. Hence to Mr. Gandhi "the victory achieved in this case was not quite pure." At all events it established between him and the industrial workers of Ahmedabad a very close bond, which has endured and led to much welfare work. Finally, there was a fifth occasion at Kheda—and it is important because, in Mr. Gandhi's own words "it marked the beginning of an awakening among the peasants of Gujarat, the beginning of their true political education." The *rayat* there considered themselves entitled to rent relief owing to failure of crops, and the Satyagrahis were supported by men like Sardar V. J. Patel, who has been to the fore ever since in the agrarian troubles of Gujarat. The Government ultimately yielded to the general outcry raised and remitted payment.

VERSAILLES—

The story, after this unavoidable digression, has now been brought up to the date, at which we left it—the end of 1918, and, with it, the end of the War. In complete and striking contrast to such Gandhian methods and aims, that other, but

no less sincere, friend of India, E. S. Montagu, had been maturing his plans in England, after his winter (1917-18) in India. During his Indian visit the idea had occurred to him, that to strike the imagination and prove the new "angle of vision," an Indian should be made Secretary of State for India, and as such pilot the new Government of India Bill through Parliament, he himself, Montagu, becoming his Under-Secretary. As his successor he had chosen Sir S. P. Sinha, who, he says, "is really on the whole the greatest gentleman and the most loyal and attractive Indian I have known."¹ This plan—like all his plans—suffered a sea-change, after reaching England. The most he could obtain was that Sinha should be created a baron and take his seat in the Lords as Under-Secretary of State for India, whilst Montagu himself would retain his post as hitherto. Thus the New Year 1919, began with the entrance of the first Indian into the House of Lords.

Meanwhile the making of the "Peace" had started in Paris: and Montagu took good care to see to it, that the occasion should still further enhance and consolidate India's status in the world. I am extremely fortunate in being able in this connection to give the recollection of E. S. Montagu himself, who in a letter² very kindly sketched the history of the matter for me, as follows: "India had claimed, and obtained the right through her contributions to the War and the gradually changing status of her representatives in Empire conferences, to be counted in all British Imperial Peace and War deliberations as a Dominion. When, therefore, we went to the Peace Conference—Lord Sinha, the Maharaja of Bikaner and myself—we were all three representatives of the Indian Empire. It was in that capacity and not as a British Minister that I went,

¹ *An Indian Diary*, p. 76. Elsewhere (p. 87) Montagu calls the people he met at Sinha's "the modern Bengali at his best." There would be a natural affinity between the Brahmoism of the one and the liberal Judaism of the other.

² Dated July 16, 1924.

although, of course, my right to represent India was derived from the fact that I was a British Minister. We were careful always to claim the new status that India had acquired, which we all regarded as of great importance to her because of the necessary Imperial and internal results of this achievement. When it was then decided, in drawing up the Covenant of the League of Nations, that the Dominions should be Original State Members of the League, it was our privilege to argue, and to argue successfully, that India must also in this matter be regarded as having the status of a British Dominion." In a subsequent letter¹ he adds: "India's position on the British Imperial War Cabinet, and the place allotted to her representatives on a footing with the Dominions on my suggestion gained for her ultimately, after some argument, her position as an original member of the League of Nations. I attended the Peace Conference not as a member of the British Government but as head of the Indian delegation, and therefore when I was chosen as Chairman of the Commission of the Peace Conference which settled the financial details of the Treaty with Germany apart from reparations, India provided the only British Empire Chairman, as far as my recollection goes, who presided over any of the Commissions. We claimed, I think, all that we could get for India because we thought that her imperial and international recognition as a Dominion would bring in its train the grant of Dominion Constitution."

As for the status of India at the Peace Conference, it must be recalled that the only "Powers with general interests," entitled to attend all meetings of the Conference, were the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan; the other twenty-seven members of the Conference could only attend the Plenary Sessions and such Commissions to which they were appointed. The Enemy Powers, of course, were not admitted at all and the Neutral Powers, only when specially summoned for a specific

¹ Of August 5, 1924.

purpose. Of the thirty-one members again each had only one vote, but the number of plenipotentiaries to which they were entitled varied, as follows:—

The United States, Great Britain, France and Japan were entitled to	5 each
Belgium, Brazil and Serbia to	3 each
Canada, Australia, South Africa, India, China, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Hedjaz, Poland, Portugal, Rumania and Siam to	2 each
New Zealand, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guate- mala, Haiti, Honduras, Liberia, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Uruguay to	1 each

This gives a very fair idea of the position occupied by India at the time in world-opinion: and one ought to add that, of course, no British Crown Colony or Protectorate figured at all at Versailles, nor even the little White Dominion of Newfoundland. In addition E. S. Montagu, as already stated, presided from January 23rd to March 1st over the Supreme Council during the consideration of "Financial Questions"; but India's main contribution to the work at Paris consisted in the pressure it exercised through E. S. Montagu (and otherwise) in favour of a mitigation of the sentence passed by the Conference on Turkey. To this we shall have to revert presently. When it came to the actual signing of the historic document on June 28, 1919, the two Indian plenipotentiaries who signed the treaty of peace for India (which alphabetically came seventh—after New Zealand and before France) were "The Right Honourable Edwin Samuel Montagu, M.P., His Majesty's Secretary of State for India; Major-General His Highness Maharaja Sir Ganga Singh Bahadur, Maharaja of Bikaner, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., A.D.C.," but Lord Sinha was also on the panel of the India section of the British Empire. It is interesting to note and important to emphasize

here that in the eyes and intention of the India Office "the Secretary of State (Mr. E. S. Montagu) and Lord Sinha (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State) represented British India and the Maharaja of Bikaner the Indian States." I am making this statement on the strength of a memorandum supplied to, and forwarded to me by, the late E. S. Montagu; which, together with his two letters, provides most valuable information on the inner history of India at Versailles.

Three facts, very pertinent to India's Renaissance, stand out: (1) that it was E. S. Montagu and his single-minded devotion to India alone, which planned from the first to place India on a *de facto* equality with the Dominions; (2) that this equality was not conceded without a struggle; and (3) that the *de facto* equality was intended deliberately as a step towards *de jure* equality.

—and JALLIANWALLA BAGH

Mr. Montagu aimed in all he did at getting for India a Dominion Constitution; but his far-seeing and far-reaching plans were not allowed to mature with the swiftness, which the swiftness of the change which had come over India not only warranted, but demanded. What C. R. Das¹ had told him a year before in Calcutta, was coming to pass: there was no popular enthusiasm for the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, because they were a half-way house. He told Montagu then that "it could not work; that the I.C.S. would have it in their power to prevent it work-

¹ "Deshabandhu" (Chitta Ranjan) Das (1870-1925), a Brahmo, like Aravinda Ghose, and, like him, failed 1890 in I.C.S. examination. Called to the Bar (Inner Temple) in 1894, returned to Calcutta, defended Aravinda in the Alipore bomb case in 1908. Inspired by the declaration of August 20, 1917, he entered politics and appeared at the Congress (Calcutta, 1917) pleading for a "Constitution suited to India's genius." The Reforms, as offered, he rejected at the 1918 Congress (held in Delhi), and thereafter.

ing and meant to do it. The half-way house is no good; there is no intermediate possible between responsible government and complete irresponsibility.¹ Every word of that prophecy has come true. Montagu at the time commented on it that it was "all really completely a question of confidence": so it was—but what did the Bureaucracy do to foster that confidence? Montagu had already realized to the full that "the civil servant, rather than trust to his own authority and the righteousness of his own cause, ties himself up and everybody else with what he calls safeguards—rules, regulations and statutes. The Indian then sees that he is not trusted, and uses his powers quite irresponsibly, knowing that the Civil Service has guarded itself by its regulations."² "If you do not trust a man, he will not behave as if he ought to be trusted."³

Confidence! What did the Bureaucracy do to foster it? "Our whole policy is to make India a political country; and it is absolutely impossible to associate that with repression," Montagu had said⁴: the Bureaucracy on its part asked just for that, Repression, as a "safeguard" of "making India a political country"! The War coming to an end, the exceptional powers conferred upon the Executive by the Defence Act were thus about to expire likewise: but such powers, the Bureaucracy insisted, were absolutely essential. After a hundred, two hundred, years of British Rule, its officers declared it impossible to maintain internal order, unless they were given the power to lock up, without trial, anybody they liked, for as long as they liked! If such was the case indeed, surely no further reason need be looked for, for bringing that Rule to a close. A Committee under a judge of the High Court of King's Bench, Rowlatt, had reported in favour of the Bureaucracy's demand, and two Bills, popularly known as the Rowlatt Bills, were accordingly introduced in February 1919, in the Imperial

¹ *An Indian Diary*, p. 91.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

² *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

Legislative Council. They produced a profound impression upon the whole of politically minded India, as they seemed to prove that all the fine words and promises were so much pie-crust. All Indian members in the Legislative Council were solidly against them, the whole country cried out against them—but, as if urged on by some malignant power, the Bureaucracy insisted upon its Rowlatt Bills becoming law; and law they became on March 18th, though their provisions were never given effect to subsequently. But though this Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Act was even eventually repealed, its consequences could not be recalled—for, as Surendranath Banerjea observed,¹ “the Rowlatt Act was the parent of the Non-Cooperation Movement.”

To Mr. Gandhi, a Rowlatt Bill was, needless to say, a law to be conscientiously disobeyed and its introduction a signal for another moral combat, another heaven-sent opportunity for making an experiment with Satyagraha. He launched a Satyagraha League in Bombay for the set purpose of disobeying “the Bills known as the Criminal Law Amendment Bill No. 1 of 1919, and the Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill No. 2 of 1919, as unjust, subversive of all the principles of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of the individual, on which the safety of India as a whole and the State itself is based.” The pledge taken by Satyagrahis to disobey these laws, if the Bills went through, did however not stop at that, but included “such other laws as a Committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit.”² The Indian Liberals, of course, though they were fierce in their opposition to the Bills, declared at once that they disapproved of people offering civil disobedience on this account; Mrs. Besant after some vacil-

¹ Loc. cit., p. 300.

² This vague expression apparently referred to two other matters Mr. Gandhi had in mind—breaking the extremely unpopular salt-tax by making salt from sea-water, and selling the proscribed pamphlets *Hind Swaraj* and *Sarvodaya*.

lation signed the pledge, but without the addition of "such other laws." The Bills having become law, Mr. Gandhi wished to inaugurate the Satyagraha by an act of self-purification and so decreed a day of fasting and of suspending all business—the first of the *hartals* which have since become so very frequent. This *hartal* was held in Delhi on March 30th and as the police barred the way to a *hartal* procession, there was a riot, put down with much bloodshed. Mr. Gandhi was wired for by the leaders to pacify the people, but on reaching the border of the Punjab was arrested and sent back to Bombay, where he was at once set free. At the news of his arrest there were riots in Ahmedabad and later in Bombay. At Amritsar there was on April 10th a violent outbreak and a number of Europeans were killed by the mob, incensed at the deportation of two cherished leaders, Drs. Kichlu and Satyapal. Mr. Gandhi was appalled by the violence displayed and the outbreak of mob frenzy; and on April 18th he suspended all Satyagraha *sine die*, confessing that he had made a "Himalayan miscalculation" in calling "upon the people to launch upon civil disobedience, before they had qualified themselves for it." Civil disobedience was eagerly engaged upon; but the necessary qualifications of *ahimsa* had been spurned. "I realized," observes Mr. Gandhi¹ considerably sobered, "that the progress of the training in civil disobedience was not going to be as rapid as I had at first expected."

Meanwhile Government had everywhere put down all riots and lesser popular effervescences with a heavy hand. But the Punjab Government were panic-stricken and under its Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, decided upon a policy of "frightfulness," of the very type for which one had been told Germany was being punished at Versailles. Upon that merciless fusillade of General Dyer's on a wildly stampeding and unarmed crowd at Jallianwalla Bagh, Amritsar, upon the 379 people killed and

¹ *My Experiments with Truth*, II, p. 513.

the 1,200 left wounded on the ground, for whom General Dyer did not consider it his "job" to take the slightest thought: it is unnecessary to dilate at this hour. An Official Report (of the Hunter Committee) contains the facts, though by no means all of them; but they suffice.¹ Alas! this deliberate massacre does not stand alone. Two days later, martial law was declared throughout the Punjab and General Dyer under it issued that monstrous "crawling order," whereby innocent men and women were made to crawl through a lane of Amritsar, where others had spilt the blood of Englishmen. Well might Mr. Gandhi say that before this procedure the Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy pales in his eyes into insignificance. And even this order was not a single incident. "What of the many other orders?" asks Sir Valentine Chirol. "What of the promiscuous floggings and whippings, the indiscriminate arrests and confiscations, the so-called 'fancy punishments,' designed not so much to punish individual 'rebels' as to terrorize and humiliate?"²

Versailles and Jallianwalla Bagh: thus can be summed up India's history during the first half of 1919. Versailles and Jallianwalla Bagh: thus both Montagu and the Bureaucracy each in their own way, created an "atmosphere" for the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. . . .

¹ Chirol (*India Old and New*, p. 177), who certainly cannot be charged with anti-British bias, gives a most graphic account of this terrible business, all the more telling, because restrained.

² A Congress Committee, consisting of Messrs. Gandhi (who drew it up), Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Abbas Tyabji, and M. R. Jayakar, under the chairmanship of Pandit M. M. Malaviya, issued in 1919 an unofficial report, which I have not quoted at all, though, as Mr. Gandhi says (*My Experiments with Truth*, I, p. 528), "not a single statement in it has ever been disproved."

THE KHILAFAT AND PUNJAB WRONGS

But why this sudden panic on the part of the British in India, and more particularly in the Punjab? "In England," Blunt¹ had said a generation previously, "we are perpetually scared at the idea of a Mohammedan rising in India, and any word uttered by a Mohammedan is paid more attention to than that of twenty Hindus." Not only is that so, but the unpalatable truth must be faced, that a Mohammedan seems the only power, of which England is really frightened. Now Mohammedan India—owing to circumstances already explained—has become quite the most reactionary and unprogressive part of India and indeed, since all other Moslem countries have gone in for radical changes, of the whole Moslem world in general. The war against Turkey was thoroughly distasteful to them: and the conditions of peace that were being imposed upon Turkey seemed intolerable. Turkey had been the palladium of every Indian Moslem, the Sultan of Turkey being the Khalif of all the Faithful, his sword their ultimate protection against all encroachments on the part of the Infidel: what would happen to them, if that sure shield of theirs were removed? Without help from outside, a minority in India itself, what future was awaiting them? At that very moment something happened at the gate of India itself in Afghanistan. The old, anglophil, Amir was murdered (February 1919) and his son Amanullah immediately shaped a new course—towards Moscow. Kept informed of the strong feeling in India, of the anti-Rowlatt Act movement and the subsequent disturbances, the new Ruler of Afghanistan undoubtedly toyed with the idea of invading India, of placing himself at the head of the discontented Moslems and others and of thus substituting a new Afghan Raj for the British Raj. The latter thus was thoroughly alarmed. Its fear of a Moslem rising was more than doubled

¹ *India under Ripon*, p. 104.

by the prospect of the long-dreaded Russian invasion of India via Afghanistan. This and this alone explains the panic which had seized the Government of the Punjab and had infected even the Government of India to such an extent, that Montagu himself felt constrained to give way and largely to stifle his misgivings.

I say, this explains the panic: but it certainly does not excuse it. As for the facts, not a single Indian soldier had shown signs of rebellion; and when Amanullah started his little war upon India on April 25, 1919, it took the British Army at the North-West Frontier less than three weeks to defeat him and make him sue for an armistice. As long as the Government of India looks upon itself as a handful of foreigners, who keep a most precarious hold upon their power, a policy of rule by "prestige" and of maintaining that prestige, if necessary, by terrorism, becomes of course inevitable: the only alternative to all this is to make the Government in fact, what it is in name, a government of India; to rally to it and incorporate into it all national Indian forces and thus throw upon them and their leaders an ever-increasing responsibility for maintaining order within and defending the country against attacks from without. This involves risks, it is said: even if it did, one can but retort that an opposite policy to-day has no longer even a chance of succeeding. A Jallianwalla Bagh is no cure, any more than raising a whirlwind is a cure for a conflagration; and it is an unbalanced mind and one quite unfit for governance, that can advocate it, because, forsooth, it has often blown out a farthing dip before.

As for the Indian Mohammedans, their apprehensions grew steadily. Constantinople was occupied by Infidel armies, who had reduced the Sultan (Mohammed VI) to be a mere puppet in their hands. In May 1919 the Greeks had landed in Smyrna and the dividing-up of the whole of Turkey seemed imminent. Since the Lucknow Pact it had become customary for Moslems

to look for possible help to Hindus. They did so in this case—especially since in Mr. Gandhi they recognized a new power for getting things done. Mr. Gandhi was at this time allowed at last (October 1919) to go to the Punjab, to carry on the investigations into the atrocities committed there. The opportunity was taken to convene, in November, a Khilafat Conference in Delhi, composed of both Hindus and Moslems, to deliberate, under Mr. Gandhi's guidance, what steps should be taken to save the Khilafat. To Mr. Gandhi the question of Khilafat was presented as an integral part of the Moslem religion: and this, of course, sufficed to make him espouse the Moslem cause, since it seemed to him merely a case of protecting fellow-countrymen of his against a violation of their religion and conscience. There is little doubt that the matter, consciously, presented itself thus and thus only to him: sub-consciously, the desire of cementing Hindu-Moslem Unity against British tyranny must, of course, have played a very considerable part, but so anxious was he to rationalize to himself his espousal of the Moslem cause as purely a question of principle, that he refused at the time any sort of "pact," such as was suggested—for instance that the Moslems should give up cow-killing as a *quid pro quo* for Hindu support of the Khilafat. In itself, of course, the Khilafat is the antithesis of Satyagraha: the former method is that of brute force, the latter of "soul-force." One need not labour the internal contradiction of a Satyagrahi who mobilizes his soul-force in order to maintain the appeal to brute-force—any more than ask, how Khilafatists, who *ex hypothesi* believe in ordeal by battle,¹ can demur to accept its verdict, when the battle has gone against them. The fact is that Mr. Gandhi threw himself wholeheartedly into this Indian attempt at propping up the

¹ The objection to this method has been put as laconically as devastatingly by St. Thomas (*Contra Gentiles*, I, p. 6): "The power of arms is a sign that is not lacking even to robbers and tyrants."

worm-eaten Khilafat. The aforementioned Conference is all the more interesting, because it was there, that he first advocated "non-cooperation" with Government as an alternative to the boycott of goods, which another member, Maulana Hasrat Mohani, had suggested. As Mr. Gandhi, at the time had not yet discovered *Khadi*, he recognized that swadeshism was no match yet for the competition of foreign goods.

The importance of this Conference, however, was overshadowed by the Congress, which met the month following and for which appropriately enough—Amritsar had been chosen as venue. In the meantime the Government of India Act had just been passed into law. Montagu had moved the second reading of his Bill in June and it had had a smooth passage through Parliament, being an agreed measure. Simultaneously a Royal Proclamation of Amnesty was issued on Christmas Eve, 1919, and it was thus evident that Montagu was trying his hardest to make up for the evil committed by his subordinates in the Punjab earlier in the year. Moreover Montagu was known to be exerting all his influence in the Cabinet against the humiliation of Turkey. Mr. Gandhi therefore at the Amritsar Congress insisted upon it, that the thanks of Congress should be conveyed to Mr. Montagu, he also moved himself a resolution condemning the mob excesses which had taken place during the year. Tilak was present, but in deference to Mr. Gandhi kept silent in Congress, though in private he of course had "nothing but ridicule for Saintliness which is no match for Imperialism."¹ Tilak and Das moved a resolution which would have rejected the Reform Act; Mr. Gandhi so amended it that in the end Congress agreed to co-operate in working it. In defence of this attitude of his he said² that he "could not consider the Reforms to be an evil" and that he even "declined to consider them disappointing, since they were

¹ Athalye, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 201.

² Quoted by Pradhan, loc. cit., p. 135.

a progressive step towards responsible government. The Royal Proclamation is full of goodwill and it would be wrong for Congress not to have responded to the King's call for cooperation. We shall lose nothing by beginning with cooperation and shall at once place the bureaucracy in the wrong." Even the Ali Brothers had been released and attended the Congress; and as they obviously would at once set up a most powerful Khilafat agitation, nothing obviously was given away by Congress holding its hand for the nonce. As regards the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, the Congress decided upon the creation of a national memorial and directed the collection of five lakhs for that purpose. Mr. Gandhi was appointed one of the Trustees of the fund and another important function allotted to him was, to revise and draft anew a Constitution for Congress, which would be in accordance with the changes that had come over it. "With the assumption of this responsibility," Mr. Gandhi writes,¹ "I may be said to have made my real entrance into Congress politics": it would perhaps be more correct to say, that with it, the Congress was becoming his own organization. The death of Tilak (only six months later) removed the only personality who could have rivalled Mr. Gandhi's popularity and his control of Congress.

Mohammed Ali left for England in March 1920 at the head of a deputation and did not return to India until October. They tried their utmost to avert the worst of Turkey's fate, but in vain. Mr. Lloyd George on January 5, 1918, had given a pledge regarding Turkey, when it was urgent that the misgivings of Indian Moslems should be placated; he refused to redeem it now, when he thought that Indian Moslem opinion could be safely flouted. The *mala fides* of England seemed proved; and this was of course the sort of argument to weigh with Mr. Gandhi. Another set of circumstances seemed to confirm the conclusion that England could not be trusted.

¹ *My Experiments with Truth*, II, p. 554.

The Hunter Committee had at last published its Report and as a result, the Government had to take action. It did so in a most perfunctory manner. Not only was an Indemnity Act passed for all the officers who had taken part in the Punjab atrocities, but the chief actors in the horrible drama either went scot-free as did Sir Michael O'Dwyer, or were merely pronounced unfit for future service in India, like General Dyer. The British Parliament, the last resort of a British subject, had practically failed: the Commons had only by a narrow majority approved of the Government declaration, the Lords had even rejected it; above all the unprecedented public subscriptions raised in England for such "heroes" of White Prestige, as General Dyer, convinced India, that England was quite unrepentant of the horrors committed. England—not merely a subordinate Indian Government—had been found wanting; the Supreme Authority in the Empire had condoned such outrages, had torn up its solemn pledges and violated the religious beliefs of seventy million Indian Moslems. But an authority which had thus acted had to a man like Mr. Gandhi become immoral and therefore was no longer one that could be obeyed. It had proved itself to be essentially evil; and if he was not to participate in and abet this evil, the individual must openly and clearly dissociate himself from such Government. "It is better to die in the way of God than to live in the way of Satan," declared Mr. Gandhi, in that wonderful way of his which knows so well to combine Humility with Fortitude. "Therefore whoever is satisfied that this Government represents the activity of Satan has no choice left to him, but to dissociate himself from it."¹

Such was the actual origin and beginning of the Non-Cooperation movement in India; and I must say I know of nothing more melancholy than the British "statesmanship" which managed to convert Mr. Gandhi and Congress from their

¹ Quoted by Chirol, *loc. cit.*, p. 192.

still benevolent neutrality at Amritsar in December 1919, to their declaration of war at Calcutta nine months later.

THE NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT CAPTURES CONGRESS

The special session of the Congress at Calcutta was held (in September 1920) under the presidency of Lajpat Rai. Mr. Gandhi had had long previous confabulations with the Moslem leaders and only after they had assured him that Moslems could and would adopt a "non-violent" form of "non-cooperation," he agreed to launch his Satyagraha for the benefit and with the help of the Moslems. Originally the offensive was to have had only two objectives; removal of the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs; but Motilal Nehru suggested to Mr. Gandhi that the absence of Swaraj lay at the root of these two particular wrongs, and so the obtaining of Swaraj was added as a third item, for the attainment of which the Non-Cooperation movement¹ was launched. Consequently when Mr. Gandhi made his great speech,² he proposed that "in view of (1) Khilafat and (2) Punjab (April 1919) wrongs, no contentment in India without redress of these two wrongs is possible and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs the establishment of Swarajya is needed." Hence he asked Congress to adopt a policy of "progressive non-violent non-cooperation." "Congress," he exclaimed, "must enforce a clear repentance, before accepting

¹ The word "Satyagraha" was not used, as it would make little appeal to Moslems (!); hence Mr. Gandhi coined "Non-Cooperation" instead of it, and "Non-Violence" in the place of the equally Sanskritic and Hindu notion of "Ahimsa."

² Published separately by Ganesh & Co. in 1921 under the title *Swaraj in One Year*. Mr. Gandhi had said that if his method was meticulously followed by the nation, Swaraj could be obtained even within one short year.

a single gift, however rich, from those bloodstained hands." His former benevolent attitude towards the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms consequently had to be changed. "The issue is, whether Swarajya has to be gained through the new Councils or without the Councils. Knowing the British Government to be utterly unrepentant, how can we believe that the new Councils will lead to Swarajya?" And what, ultimately, did he mean by Swarajya? "It means a state," he replied, "such that we can maintain our separate existence without the presence of the English. If it is to be a partnership, it must be a partnership at will."

It was a great speech and the magnetic personality of the speaker carried the day—ultimately. Still, there was very strong opposition indeed at the Calcutta Congress to the adoption of Mr. Gandhi's novel and revolutionary methods. Amongst others, Pandit M. M. Malaviya was opposed to them; so were B. C. Pal and Mrs. Besant; so was C. R. Das. At the final voting, only 1,855, out of a total of 2,728 votes cast, went for Mr. Gandhi's proposal: thus he carried the day, but the Congress was by no means yet wholly convinced. Das, indeed and his followers at the regular annual Congress session held four months later (Nagpur, December 1920), fully cast in their lot with Mr. Gandhi; whilst others like Mrs. Besant and B. C. Pal withdrew from the Congress altogether and joined the Liberals. The final separation between intransigents and moderates had been achieved.

The Calcutta session over, Mr. Gandhi followed up his success by a whirlwind campaign in the country. The four months he had in front of him until the annual session of Congress in Nagpur, he devoted to an intensive and extensive propaganda in order to popularize the triple vow of "non-cooperation" which he had inaugurated. All honours were to be returned to Government (medals, titles, pensions and the like) and he made a start by returning all his own medals in a personal

letter to the Viceroy. This was a very natural consequence to anyone who thought that all governmental touch had become contaminating: it had the tactical advantage of making those who refused to comply appear as sycophants and mere mercenaries of Government. The second thing to do was for all lawyers to give up practice and for all litigants to shun the law-courts, composing their differences as best they could through private arbitration. Again, this was a perfectly logical procedure, for how could one seek "justice" at the hands of Satan? In practice it had deplorable results, since "non-cooperators" refused to plead in Courts, when accused, and thus let their cases go by default: which in turn opened the door to unbridled police *zoolum*.¹ On the other hand, the sacrifice entailed by lawyers forgoing their not infrequently princely incomes stands out as a shining witness to the moral force engendered by Satyagraha.² Similarly there was to be a boycott of all educational establishments which received in any way a Government subsidy, as in them a "slave mentality" would be bred, mesmerizing people so as to render them incapable of seeing and doing the truth. However correct it is to say that instruction in India is given from the English and not from the Indian point of view, the abrupt boycott of all existing colleges and schools was disastrous. It ruined the career and life of hundreds of young people; worse still, by calling upon them—even against the order of their parents and guardians—to quit their schools, it introduced a spirit of rebelliousness in youth against

¹ Chicanery.

² The conversion of Motilal Nehru (cf. his appearance at Surat, p. 153) is an instance of the force of Mr. Gandhi's example and doctrine. He was so wealthy and dainty that he pretended dress-shirts could only be washed in Paris, and he consequently had baskets of dress-shirts going backward and forwards between Allahabad and Paris! On becoming a Gandhist, he gave up all his practice, dressed in rough homespun, and, before dying, made over to the nation his palace at Allahabad as permanent headquarters for the Congress.

all authority and deluded them into a belief that it is more patriotic to indulge in political excitement than to engage upon humdrum studies. The National Colleges and Schools which Mr. Gandhi wished to see created came to very little, if anything at all, and may be said to have soon disappeared altogether. The final method whereby any non-cooperator, whether old or young, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, was to put into practice the faith that was in him, was the *Khadi*¹ method.

This Gospel of Homespun had been evolved by Mr. Gandhi only a year previously. He had always favoured *Swadeshi*, of course. In *Hind Swaraj*² written twelve years previously, he had exclaimed already: "Our gods even are made in Germany—what need to speak of matches, pins and glassware? What did India do before these articles were introduced? Precisely the same should be done to-day. The ancient and sacred handlooms should be re-established in the households. . . ." But not everybody can weave: and in any case, how weave without yarn? Hence the whole of this idea became to him only practicable, when he had rediscovered the ancient Indian spinning-wheel, the *charkha*. This, he found, everybody could operate and, with sufficient yarn produced, he argued, homespun cloth would abound in India and make it possible for India to rid itself of the drain to which it is subjected to-day by having to import all its cloth from abroad. Moreover the *charkha* offered a subsidiary occupation, for the lack of which the whole agricultural population of India is actually condemned to complete idleness for at least one-third of the year. Sure enough, Mr. Gandhi's Khadi-Economics cannot be the panacea he considers it to be: but it would be very short-sighted indeed not to perceive that it contains a very large and very precious amount of truth. Even if the exclusive and exaggerated claims made for *Khadi* cannot be admitted, it

¹ Or Khaddar = Homespun.

² *Indian Home Rule*, by M. K. Gandhi, 2nd ed., Madras, 1922, p. 88.

would be quite false to see in it nothing but the fad of a visionary. *Khadi* has already given a *cachet* of its own to the whole outer aspect of life in modern India and has largely clad it in the sacrificial white robes of Satyagraha. At least the Gandhi Cap is rapidly becoming the nation's headdress, universal to a degree comparable only to that of the fez in pre-War Moslem countries: perhaps a trifle in itself—but a fair indication of the unique impression that Mahatma Gandhi has made upon the whole of his country, both upon the masses and the classes.

The Non-Cooperation movement was thus launched by Mr. Gandhi after the Calcutta meeting, not only by a personal tour undertaken by him, but by a great organization of one central and innumerable local committees, who were to see to it that the items of the programme were carried out. Mr. Pradhan¹ gives a good description of the manner in which the new gospel was received by the people. "They listened with rapt attention; they believed with simple, quiet faith; new hopes filled their souls; the reference to a coming *Rama Rajya* of universal righteousness, justice and happiness made them look forward to the promised day—a year hence?—when the satanic British Government would meet the fate it so richly deserved and an end would be put to the growing miseries of the toiling masses, ground down by heavy taxation, wallowing in ignorance and servitude and harassed by wicked officials."

The first elections under the new Government of India Act were being held just at that time: and it is a true irony of fate that just when the Montagu-Chelmsford Reformers made their cautious first essay in giving the vote to three per cent. of the population of India, Mr. Gandhi should have appealed—the first to do so—to the 100 per cent. of the Indian people; that where the others had erected electorates, separating Moslems and Sikhs, Christians and Hindus, Moderates and

¹ *India's Struggle for Swaraj*, p. 157

Landholders, from each other and from the rest of the electors, Mr. Gandhi should have made his appeal for the pulling down of these barriers between religions and castes, for the removal of untouchability and for the unity, not only of Moslems and Hindus, but of the whole nation; and that, where the new legislatures were to be allowed to indulge in a dyarchy of British and Indian, which left no doubt as to who was to be—and remain—first and who second: Mr. Gandhi should have inspired all Indians with the longing for the speedy attainment of full Swaraj, of the right to rule themselves. The Non-Cooperation movement of course implied the rigorous boycott also of these elections, both as regards electors and candidates: but in historical retrospect one fully realizes that the nature and the success of Mr. Gandhi's appeal to the masses had already in itself rendered the new Reforms obsolete, before they could even come into operation. Once more, they had come too late: necessarily so, because all these Reforms have always been imposed from without, instead of being produced from within; just as if a rapidly growing organism was measured for a tegument, which, put on, is already found to have become too small, instead of it being allowed to grow its own skin.

We shall have to revert to these Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms anon, but will continue first the non-cooperation story up to its triumph at Nagpur (Christmas, 1920). Twenty thousand delegates had come together, a greater number than the Congress had ever drawn, to confirm the Calcutta resolutions regarding Non-Cooperation—and this time to confirm them unanimously. The die had been cast and everybody was now for seeing it through. The Nagpur session was, however, mainly concerned about the new Constitution of Congress, which Mr. Gandhi had drawn up. In this draft the attainment of Swaraj remained the goal of Congress; but it now read “within the British Empire, if possible, and without, if neces-

sary"; and the means from being "constitutional" had now become "by all peaceful and legitimate means." As Mr. Gandhi explained, he was not one who wanted to end the British connection unconditionally and at all costs, as many present did. "If the British connection is for the advancement of India, we do not want to destroy it; but if it is inconsistent with our national self-respect, then it is our bounden duty to destroy it, he maintained. His draft therefore presented the middle course between the view of members like Mr. Malaviya and Mr. Jinnah, who wanted no change in the Congress "creed," and the Extremists; just as the latter had wanted to put in simply "by all means"—but there again Mr. Gandhi's counsel had prevailed. Of other important resolutions then carried, which fixed the future Congress development, those committing Congress to the removal of untouchability and to Khadi work deserve to be mentioned. Maulana Mohammed Ali was, of course, a prominent figure at the Congress and the Khilafat cause was kept by him well in the foreground of the session. To commemorate Lokmanya Tilak, it was decided to collect a crore of rupees as a war chest for Congress: this has been one of the most important moves made, for it placed the Congress at once in possession of large financial resources which have enabled it to enrol a large army of Congress Volunteers. In order to emphasize that India henceforth counted only on its own strength and cared not a fig for what course it might please England to adopt, the Congress organ in England, *India*, and the British Congress Committee in London were abolished—one of the many mischievous "gestures" in which post-War Congress has been so fond of indulging, cutting off its nose to spite its face.

With the Nagpur session the Congress became a new well-disciplined and well-funded organization and can be said to have definitely settled down to a policy of extremism which, however, Mr. Gandhi's innate conservatism and love of jus-

tice have never permitted to go beyond a perfectly legitimate national intransigence.

LORD READING TAKES CHARGE

Whilst the Congress was thus working away in one sense, the Liberals were busy in another. Their National Liberal Federation had in 1920 reached its fourth annual session: but it must candidly be admitted, that, if Congress meetings had developed an unmistakable tendency towards hysteria, the bane of the Liberal gatherings was their stodginess. Sure enough, the Liberals included many leaders of first-rate calibre, but they lacked a popular following. The Liberals maintained the old Congress appeal to the intelligentsia; Mr. Gandhi made his appeal to the masses—and having them on his side, he found the intelligentsia likewise rallying to him: if only on the principle, so lucidly and with such delightfully unconscious humour expounded by Surendranath Banerjea to E. S. Montagu: “when you are in a minority, there is nothing to be done, but side with the majority.”¹

But the main activity of the Liberals during the last quarter of 1920—and a very important one at that—was the contesting of seats for the new Legislatures which the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms had set up: one in each major Province and an Upper and Lower Chamber at the centre (“Council of State” and “Legislative Assembly”). Notwithstanding the Non-Cooperation movement, only in six constituencies did no candidates present themselves; for the 774 seats to be filled, a couple of thousand candidates had offered themselves. Thus for the first three years of the new Councils the Liberals had the parliamentary field to themselves; and, restricted as this field was through Dyarchy and the Viceroy’s power to override by “certification” all measures taken in the Councils, it must be

¹ *An Indian Diary*, p. 326.

gratefully admitted that they rendered very valuable services by not letting the national cause go by default in these Legislatures. They were able to give wide publicity to grievances and by their cooperation improved many Government proposals; they initiated not a few new developments and their record in general was such that they would have proved a valuable acquisition in any Parliament. The King's uncle, the Duke of Connaught, came to India in January-February 1921, in order to open in person the new Councils: a move in which one can descry the hand of Montagu, who was anxious to separate the ceremonial functions of a Viceroy from the political functions of a Governor-General. The whole thing, however, was spoilt by the Non-Cooperation Movement, which, of course, was extended to this Royal visit: and the Duke was the object of *hartals* and other popular demonstrations, which were meant to draw his and all England's attention to the wrongs under which India smarted, but which, of course, only had the very opposite effect of exacerbating English feeling.

Lord Chelmsford had hitherto looked upon Mr. Gandhi's movement as one bound to fail by its "intrinsic inanity" and Anglo-India affected to regard it with amused contempt. This attitude changed after the Royal Visit, but the visit was not the only reason for the change. Elsewhere one counsels *cherchez la femme*: in India one had better advise *cherchez le Musulman*. Final peace had been concluded with the new Ruler of Afghanistan, by according him complete independence and sovereignty: His Highness the Amir henceforth became officially His Majesty King Amanullah of Afghanistan. The first thing this King did, was to conclude a treaty of amity with Mustafa Kemal Pasha (March 1, 1921), the new national deliverer of Turkey, the *Ghazi*, who was soon to drive the Greeks out of Anatolia (September 1922) and the Allies from Constantinople (September 1923). At the time (1921), he had already consolidated his power at Ankara, where a Constituent Assembly had given

a new constitution to the new nationalist Turkey, which was thus rising out of the ashes of the old Osmanli Empire. A fortnight after Kemal's treaty of amity with his neighbour Amanullah, he had concluded one with another neighbour of his, the U.S.S.R., as Russia nowadays called itself. Simultaneously Russia had concluded a similar treaty with Persia. The whole Moslem world seemed to array itself against England and the Khilafat agitation in India therefore took on a very special and sinister significance for the British Government. That its anxiety about Moslem turbulence in India was not ill-founded, was proved in September 1921 by the outbreak of the Moplah Rebellion in Malabar.

Another source of anxiety was provided by the traditional enemies of the Moslems in the Punjab, the Sikhs. If they too were antagonized, where could the Government look for support? The unrest among the Sikhs had its origin in the reforming zeal of a puritanical section among the Sikhs, the Akalis, who were indignant at the abuses that had crept into the management of the Sikh sanctuaries. These shrines and temples had been heavily endowed by the pious of many generations and this great wealth had been, as usual, very bad for the "Mahant," the administrators of these sanctuaries, many of whom were notorious evil-livers and squandered the revenues, of which they were legally possessed, in gross immorality and at least for purely selfish ends. The Akali Movement arose in the Punjab in 1920, in order to purify Sikhism of all such abuses: and one would *prima facie* expect that it would have received the full favour and support of Government. But owing to the unnatural position of the latter, as an alien power, the result was exactly the opposite. The Government being "neutral" in religious matters, it declared its inability of interfering in the quarrel between Akalis and Mahants. The former, finding persuasion unavailing, resorted to physical force. The Mahants hired guards, who bundled the Akali out of the sacred premises.

Then in 1921, the Akalis tried the elsewhere so much praised Non-Cooperation mass method against the Mahants. The latter, nonplussed, called in the police and demanded, as legally registered owners, governmental protection against these breakers of the law. The Government could not resist this appeal to uphold the sanctity of the rights of property and did so—with the only result that the Akalis, who had been Satyagrahis against their Mahants, now became—and with what redoubled zest!—Satyagrahis against a Government satanic enough to protect those sons of Belial, the Mahants. The whole story is highly instructive and illustrates once more the tragedy of the wrong and untenable position into which an alien Government necessarily slides, whatever its motives may be. To complete the Akali story, let us anticipate that by 1922 the Government gave in and through a new Sikh Shrines Act of November 1922 effected a compromise which ejected the unjust stewards and saved the face of Government. The main grievance was thus removed, but unreconcilable Babar Akali Jathas have continued since to trouble the peace of the Punjab.

Another change at the moment (April 1921) was caused by the succession of Lord Reading to the Viceroyalty. Lord Chelmsford's "patience, self-control and receptiveness" have been recorded by Montagu¹; besides, "he is a gentleman, if ever there was one." On the other hand "his refusal to give a lead and his lack of constructive ability are very obvious"; and he was thus always ready to defer to the superior wisdom of the Bureaucracy. Lord Reading was of a very different type—the brilliant, intellectual type, astute in politics, attracted by finance. Lord Reading gave the impression that he never felt happier during his time in India than when he could be in Calcutta in the company of "big business" (European):

¹ *An Indian Diary*, p. 363.

² It was Lord Reading who "greatly encouraged" the European Association to take up political activity: see Sir Hubert Carr in *Political India* (London, 1932), p. 140.

and his panacea for all discontents seemed to be to "improve business." Indian political aspirations set no sympathetic chord vibrating in his own heart and Mr. Gandhi's philosophy and methods met with still less understanding sympathy. Yet he had not been a month in India than an interview between the two men had been arranged (by Pandit M. M. Malaviya). In the course of it Lord Reading suggested that Mohammed Ali was not playing the game by Mr. Gandhi, as he was openly inciting to violence in his speeches. Mr. Gandhi was extremely sensitive to any charge of disloyalty levelled against friends of his and hotly denied it in this case, saying that he would ask the Maulana to declare publicly that the passages in question had been purely metaphorical. Lord Reading then volunteered the assurance that, if Mohammed Ali thus apologized, the Government would drop the idea of prosecuting him. The Maulana, in due course (May 29, 1921), published the promised statement, in which he pledged his word "neither directly nor indirectly to advocate violence at present or in the future, nor create an atmosphere of preparedness for violence, as long as we are associated with the movement of Non-violent Non-cooperation."¹ The public looked upon the incident as an out-manœuvring of Mr. Gandhi and a retreat on the part of the Ali Brothers: and Lord Reading was written down as a very dangerous enemy.

Mr. Gandhi as a consequence of this encounter launched in July the boycott of foreign cloth, as a weapon, destined to hit Lord Reading's vulnerable spot—business. A monster bonfire of foreign cloth on August 1st commemorated the anniversary of Tilak's death. In the same month of August the Khilafat Conference at Karachi was held under the presidency of Mohammed Ali, but in the absence of Mr. Gandhi. A resolution was passed, declaring it *haram* (religiously forbidden) for Moslems to serve the Indian Government, not only in a civil,

¹ See *The Ali Brothers* (in the Natesan Series), Madras, 1922, p. 36.

but also in a military capacity. In the same month the Moplah Rebellion broke out; in September the Ali Brothers were arrested in connection with the Karachi Resolution and in due course sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Mr. Gandhi, of course, stood by his allies. The incriminated Karachi Resolution was signed not only by him, but by forty-six of the most prominent Congress Leaders as well, and not enough with that, copies of it were signed and passed at innumerable meetings up and down the country. Government's authority was deliberately challenged and the atmosphere grew steadily worse. But time was against Mr. Gandhi. The year was coming to a close and Swaraj did not seem any nearer. In many sections of the population the novelty of the Non-Cooperation method had worked upon a simple faith which expected magical results. But nothing had happened. Mahatma Gandhi was opening out one after the other all the registers on his Satyagraha organ and yet the walls of Jericho refused to fall. He was now calling for non-payment of taxes. What other means were left to him? Besides, the horrors committed by the (Moslem) Moplahs against the Hindus in British Malabar caused throughout India a strong feeling of resentment against Moslems in general; and one may well say that the Moplah Rebellion was the first event to loosen Hindu-Moslem unity.

Disillusionment was creeping over Mr. Gandhi's followers. The more ardent spirits resented more and more the limitation which "Non-Violence" imposed upon their activities. Just then the Prince of Wales—against the advice of everybody in India—visited India (November 1921 to February 1922). A *hartal* was declared and the Prince's visit was to be "non-cooperated" with, wherever he went. At his very landing in Bombay, there were riots between those who wanted and those who did not want to keep the *hartal* and 53 persons were killed. The police everywhere tried to put down the *hartals*: with what result upon the "loyalty" of the people, can be left

to the reader's imagination. Everywhere, in Calcutta, in Allahabad, in Lahore, the *hartals* were all the more complete. More "volunteers" (who were exhorting people to boycott the visit) were arrested. C. R. Das was among the arrested; whereupon the whole of his family, including the ladies, offered themselves as "volunteers" for arrest. Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai—over 20,000 were arrested for offering Satyagraha to the Prince's visit.

The Annual Session of Congress was held in that tense atmosphere (at Ahmedabad, Christmas, 1921). The President-Elect, Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, was in jail, a prominent Moslem leader, Hakim Ajmal Khan, taking his place. Mr. Gandhi had condemned with the utmost severity the lapses into violence; after the Bombay riots he had said that "the *swaraj*, he had then witnessed, had stunk in his nostrils"; as against that the hitherto unparalleled display of Satyagraha, offered according to the rules, by suffering instead of inflicting wrong, could not but fill him with the greatest satisfaction. The policy of repression systematically pursued by Government must be met by a new policy of individual and mass civil disobedience and for that purpose every Indian man, woman or child, was exhorted to join the National Volunteer Corps and offer himself for arrest. The Congress jubilated assent and appointed Mr. Gandhi Dictator with *carte blanche* as to the means of carrying out that policy. Yet when Maulana Hasrat Mohani, who had got the Moslem League to declare for complete independence and the establishment of a Republic (the United States of India), rose at the Ahmedabad Congress to change the Congress "creed" in a similar sense, Mr. Gandhi insisted on no change being made, and on the maintenance of the British connection, if at all possible, being continued. For however much Mr. Gandhi wanted that "the Authority enthroned on arrogance," which confronted them, should perish, he only wanted this, "unless it repents." He therefore

still declared himself also as quite prepared to take part in a Round-Table Conference¹ between Government and Congress Delegates, "if it is a real Conference, where only equals are to sit and there is not a single beggar."² I quote his exact words, as they might apply with equal propriety to 1931 as to 1921: Mr. Gandhi and the demands of India, which he so accurately formulated in these works spoken ten years previously, have not changed. What has changed is the British attitude. As that which Morley declared to be out of all question, Responsible Government, was conceded ten years later by Montagu, so also what Lord Reading spurned as preposterous, not even ten years later, became an accomplished fact, when Lord Irwin and Mahatma Gandhi, neither of them as beggar, and both of them as equals, concluded their Pact.

In the meantime things took their appointed course. Mr. Gandhi sent on February 1, 1922, a letter to Lord Reading specifying that unless the Government proved a complete change of heart within seven days, he would begin Civil Disobedience at a small place in Gujerat called Bardoli, since Lord Reading had broken faith with him, promising at the interview of May 1921 not to interfere with the "Non-Cooperation movement, provided it remained non-violent." The whole of India with bated breath counted the days to the taking effect of this Declaration of War. Within that week, however, of all weeks, on February 4th, a mob of 3,000 men, led by Congress Volunteers, massacred twenty-two policemen at Chauri Chaura, a little town in the United Provinces. Mahatma Gandhi was literally horrified at the news that his movement of high soul-force had been thus bespattered with the blood of adversaries, murdered by men vowed to non-violence. He immediately countermanded the outbreak of hostilities at Bardoli; he even

¹ Which Pandit M. M. Malaviya was anxious to arrange.

² I quote from p. 273 of Athalye's *Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, Poona, 1923.

ordered the cessation of all and sundry activities of Congress aiming at any defiance of governmental authority. The stain on their Satyagraha had to be washed away by self-purification, by intense penance and by concentration on the "Constructive Programme" of Congress (handspinning, etc.), before there could be any thought of resuming Satyagraha.

The word of the Dictator-Mahatma was obeyed: but it aroused a perfect fury of rebellion in the Congress camp. All those—and they were the vast majority—who had swallowed Mr. Gandhi's "non-violence" as a *pis aller* for the time being, but who were really panting for the outbreak of a great Revolution which was to sweep every Britisher into the sea: all these followers of his were alike stunned by this grand anti-climax. They felt—and probably they were right—that things had come to such a pass, that opinion had been screwed up to such a pitch, that 1922 might easily have proved the right moment for the outbreak of another "mutiny," but a successful one that time. Let us not forget that the Irish "Rebels" had just been able to wring a treaty out of the British Government (December 6, 1921), after a war of less than two years (the Irish Republic having been proclaimed in January 1919): was it really tolerable to think that what a little nation of three millions had achieved, a whole continent of three hundred millions could not effect, whatever the might and main of England might seem to be? And just when India had lifted her arm to strike the final blow, for her own greatest son to snatch the weapon out of her hand! Very many felt that this was carrying the "saint-business" too far: as long as it could be coined into good solid political currency, it was right enough—but when it began to dictate to politics, no, clearly it had overstepped the limit.

The Hosannah chorus ceased abruptly and one could almost catch already snatches of "Crucify!" That was the moment chosen by Lord Reading to pounce upon the one man, who had tried to maintain the British connection; the one man, who had

kept a moderating influence upon the firebrands of Panislamism; the one man, who had prevented the outbreak of a bloody revolution. And he pounced upon him, when he was—for the time—"down and out": and because of it.

On March 10, 1922, Mahatma Gandhi was arrested.

FULL SPEED ASTERN

Lord Reading had decided to eliminate Mr. Gandhi from the political scene and in due course he had him sentenced to six years' imprisonment for "promoting disaffection," a crime under §124A of the Indian Penal Code. Mr. Gandhi, of course, not only pleaded guilty, but explained¹ that in his opinion "affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system, one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite to violence." And he proceeded to give a succinct account, how his own affection for England had been turned into disaffection and how "from a staunch loyalist and cooperator I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-cooperator." What Englishman can read that indictment, without a sense of indignation at the folly with which such a fund of goodwill had been dissipated, instead of being turned to good account in cementing Indi-British friendship? Nobody certainly can read an account of that extraordinary trial, without poignantly feeling the tragedy of that historic scene. The little court, where everybody respectfully, nay reverently, rises when the accused enters; the courtesy and apologies of the Judge; the serenity and winning smile of the accused, who describes his occupation as that of a peasant and spinner. And then the savage sentence. . . .

¹ I quote from a pamphlet published in Karachi in 1922, entitled *The Historic Trial of Mahatma Gandhi*. The trial took place on March 18, 1922.

A parallel between this court-scene and one before a Roman Governor in Jerusalem two thousand years back, between the "weaver" and the Carpenter, became popular in India, nobody could say exactly how. K. T. Paul¹ refers to it: "When Mahatma Gandhi was convicted, All-India seemed to have become suddenly aware of the meaning of the Cross. Instinctively the mind and heart of India reverted to a similar happening in the court of Pilate." Dr. Macnicol² similarly refers to this parallel: "Mr. Gandhi was deliberately and gladly laying himself upon the altar, in order that his people might be born again to what he believed would be a higher level of living." The parallel may seem to many far-fetched: that it was so spontaneously and universally made, is at all events a very significant fact and one which shows the great role that the Mahatma is playing, unwittingly, in India's *praeparatio evangelica*.

For the time being the Mahatma was put on the shelf: before this could happen in India, however, another personality had to be put on the shelf in England—Edwin S. Montagu, who in his own manner had so faithfully laboured (I quote from the Montagu—Chelmsford Report) "to disturb the placid, pathetic contentment of the masses, which is not the soil on which Indian nationhood can grow." He had been forced to resign the post of Secretary of State for India, which he had held for five years against a rising tide of Imperialism. By the time he was thrown to the Tory wolves, he had become practically the sole representative of Liberalism in the so-called Coalition Cabinet, which was still presided over by Mr. Lloyd George. One by one the fine schemes of "Reconstruction" after the War had been given up: the Washington Eight-Hour Day, the Sankey Nationalization of Coal-mines, the Addison Housing Scheme. The Indian Reforms was the next item on the programme, and the fiasco of the Prince of Wales' visit

¹ Loc. cit., p. 51.

² Loc. cit., p. 21.

had given it particular zest. The Reforms in themselves had been more than modest: but they could have been worked, to yield a good deal, if they had been worked in the Montagu spirit.¹ Montagu remained at his post to prevent worse happening; one cannot help thinking that this was a miscalculation, and that he would have served better the cause of India, no less than his own, if he had not palliated the policy of "frightfulness" which he had permitted the Government of India to enter upon. So one thing led to another, and when the Conservative spokesman in the Commons argued that, if the Government had at last resolved upon a "firm policy" in India, surely Mr. Montagu was not the man for that, he only drew a conclusion which had become obvious. So Montagu resigned, his post being taken by that amiable nonentity Sir Laming Worthington-Evans; Mr. Gandhi was arrested and instructions were given that henceforth the Reforms were to be worked with a view of not how much, but how little, self-government for India they could be made to yield. In full capitulation before the Conservative members of the "Coalition" and in an unedifying eagerness of retaining his premiership, Mr. Lloyd George made in August, almost exactly five years after the famous Montagu Declaration in the Commons, a much displayed speech on India, in the course of which he expatiated on the

¹ It is obvious that the Government of India Act, 1919, could have been (and could still be) applied in a manner which would in practice give full responsible government to India. Government had only to refuse to make use of its overriding powers and foster the growth of parliamentary conventions. There is nothing in the Act which for instance prevents the departments of "law and order" from being placed in the charge of Indian Executive Councillors or the Finance Members from having to shape their policies in accordance with the wishes of the Legislative Councils. Without a comma in that Act being changed, Mr. Gandhi could to-day be President of India and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru his Prime Minister, though their respective appellations would continue to be "Viceroy and Governor-General," and "Home Member" of his Council. The thing needed is not a way, but a will, not a change of phraseology, but of heart.

Indian Civil Service as the "steel frame" of the administration, which must remain British and retain its all-overriding position, whatever other changes might occur in India.

Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, one of the two United Provinces Ministers, who both resigned in May 1923, as a protest against the stultification to which they saw themselves reduced under the new policy of Full Speed Astern, has very well described¹ the change that came over Government in 1922. "At the start," Mr. Chintamani said, "one had to make an effort to realize that one was under diarchy—the two halves of the Government were working so harmoniously. But a change for the worse began on the 17th of November, 1921, when the Prince of Wales landed in India, and it was completed on the 10th of March, 1922, when Mr. Montagu's resignation was announced; since when the position of the Ministers became most unenviable. So long as Mr. Montagu, the father of the Reforms, was in office, the reformed Governments ran smoothly; but when the reins of office were taken from him, there was an attempt to deny the spirit of the Reforms, while seeming to observe the letter of the Act. Joint deliberations, which had previously been the rule, became the exception; the Finance Member's grip over the purse became tighter and tighter; the Governor's control began to be felt increasingly. Diarchy had succeeded only as long as it was ignored in practice; as soon as it was decided to work government as a diarchy, nothing but friction resulted."² Similarly at the Centre, the Government's attitude to the Legislature took on an altogether new complexion. "The process of not heeding, and even defying, the wishes of the Assembly, that began a year or so ago, was now almost

¹ Cf. *Servant of India* of June 7, 1923.

² Mr. Chintamani was Minister of Education and Industries, U.P., from 1921 to 1923. A Madrassi, he has made Allahabad his home, and conducts there since 1909 *The Leader*, the only really important Liberal daily in India. He presided over the National Liberal Federation in 1920, and has been its most energetic Secretary.

complete," recorded an acute observer¹ in July 1923. "The anxious desire on the part of Government to meet the Assembly as far as possible, which was frequently in evidence during the earlier sessions of the Assembly, is now absent."

In addition to such testimony there is a curious Bill, the monstrosously named Indian States (Protection against Disaffection) Bill, which fairly let the cat out of the bag² and brought a new factor into British Indian politics—the Indian Princes. The said Bill, leave to move which the Legislative Assembly refused in its September Session, 1922, was said to be necessary to protect the Princes against attacks made upon them by scurrilous writers in British India: as a matter of fact it was a barefaced attempt to stifle all criticism of the appalling mismanagement and despotism which goes on in 90 per cent. of all Indian States. The sudden tender regard for the Princes, displayed by the Government of India, was one of the direct results of the Prince of Wales' visit, who, of course, met with no "incidents" when he found himself in an Indian State, where enthusiasm to order is obtainable at all times and in any desired quantity. This contrast to the humiliations the Prince was exposed to in British India was quickly exploited by the Princes themselves and by all the other elements in India and in England, who held that only by an autocratic rule can "order" be kept in an "Oriental" country. Sir Frederick Lugard in fact published about this time a book in which he developed this theme and advocated the dividing up of all British India amongst the Indian Princes, who in turn were to guarantee in ample measure British "interests." It is certainly significant that Lord Lloyd, Governor of Bombay, in a State visit to the Kathiawad Princes during the year, should have sung a paean in praise of the "benevolent autocracy" he per-

¹ *Servant of India*, July 12, 1923.

² Vide an article of mine, "The Prince and the Princess," *Servant of India*, October 12, 1922.

ceived there, which, he declared, "in the East can show some excellent government." The Governor of the United Provinces soon after, at a *darbar* at Meerut, said that "reflecting men wondered whether political institutions could work in an Oriental country." Mr. Lloyd George in his "steel-frame" speech had similarly lauded—in contrast to "the great constitutional changes"—"the old system," on which "the native States are governed still," and wondered whether the other system was "suitable to India." This is the beginning of a new chapter in the British attitude towards the Indian Princes; an attitude which has governed the relations between the two ever since, and one to which we shall have to revert anon. The Princes Protection Bill, being part of the price to be paid to the Princes, was "certified" as urgent and necessary by the Viceroy, above the heads of the Legislative Assembly, and thus became law, the Upper Chamber unfortunately having accepted and passed the Bill. This was the ominous first occasion, on which Government by "certification" was resorted to: another significant illustration of the new and close alliance between English Tories, the Anglo-Indian Bureaucracy and the Indian Princes, all of whom were out to make the world safe for—the *principatus dominativus*. The Under-Secretary of State for India, Lord Winterton, was on a visit to India during 1922, and in his conferences with the Viceroy and the three Presidency Governors laid down the lines for this new re-orientation of policy, which was maintained until Mr. MacDonald for a second time became Prime Minister of England.

The first to notice the new order of "Full Speed Astern" was the Indian Member of the Executive Council (the Law Member), Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru,¹ who had been appointed

¹ Born 1875. One of the leading lawyers in India, and as such rivalling Motilal Nehru, whose political opponent also he was. Member of the old Provincial Council, 1913-16, and of the Imperial Council, 1916-20.

to that post in 1920, but who in April 1922 found it impossible, "purely for reasons of health," of course, to continue in that position. He had been quite the right-hand man of Lord Reading, during the latter's first year of Viceroyalty: after he had gone, Lord Reading leant increasingly on the new Finance Member, he had attracted to India, Sir Basil Blackett, who took charge in November 1922. At the same time the Coalition Government in England had at last broken up, Parliament was dissolved in October and the elections put into office the Conservatives who had for a considerable time and increasingly crept back into power under cover of Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition cloak. Lords Peel and Winterton were confirmed by the new Premier, Bonar Law, as Secretary and Under-Secretary of State for India respectively, and the new policy of reaction in India thus could proceed unchecked.

COMMUNALISM IN INDIA AND IN KENYA

The downfall of Mr. Lloyd George and his Coalition, long expected as it was, came as an immediate result of the breakdown of his Near East policy. The latter aimed at getting for England control of the Dardanelles by making Greece fetch these particular chestnuts out of the fire of a war with Turkey. The plan miscarried. Kemal Pasha smashed up the Greek Armies in Anatolia, and France, England's "faithful ally," placed herself on the side of Kemal Pasha. England was completely isolated, and even Mr. Lloyd George's attempt at stampeding the Dominions into a new War for the holding of the Straits fell flat. Kemal Pasha was victorious all along the line and one of his victims was Mr. Lloyd George himself. The consequences of the Ghazi's sweeping successes were of the utmost importance for India. For the first thing that

Kemal did was not only to depose the Sultan¹ (Mohammed VI), for whose Khilafat Indian Moslems had yearned to shed their blood, but to change the "Sheik-ul-Islam" into a "Commissary of Religious Affairs" and to renounce, once and for all, all claims to the Arab countries, the *Jezirat-ul-Arab*, containing the holy places of Islam, the defence of which is the primary duty of a Khalif, and which, of course, until the War had formed an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. Within a year Kemal Pasha declared in so many words that the affairs of Moslems outside Turkey were no concern whatever of his: and this direct snub of Indian Moslems, coupled with his attitude of religious aloofness and his substitution of Turkish Nationalism for Ottoman Pan-Islamism, knocked, of course, the bottom out of the Indian Moslems' Khilafat grievance. In fact this exhibition of the Indian Khilafatists of trying to be *plus royalistes que le roi* was comical enough: but it hardly improved the temper of Indian Moslems. Their reaction was twofold: some continued for a long time the Khilafat campaign, as if nothing had happened, and went on pretending Hindu-Moslem unity, though the latter was rapidly changing into Hindu-Moslem enmity; others vented their spleen on the Hindus by whom they suspected they had been tricked into supporting a Hindu Raj, under the specious plea of their helping them look for a non-existent Khilafat.

The latter attitude, of course, was bound to prevail in the end, but the "let's pretend" pose persisted for quite a long time, as it "saved face." Mohammed Ali, who had served his sentence

¹ Mohammed VI was deposed as Sultan in November 1922, but remained Khalif. The Republic was actually not declared until September 1923, and the Khilafat was not abolished until March 1924, when simultaneously Mohammed VI was exiled from Turkey. He died at San Remo in 1926. One of his daughters married a couple of years ago the Heir-Apparent of the Nizam of Hyderabad—who on his part is well known to aspire to be the Khalif of the Faithful: at least in India, if not also for the rest of the world.

by 1923, was for quite a long time the foremost exponent of this policy, and when President of Congress (Cocanada, 1923), devoted the whole of his extremely long presidential speech to a historical disquisition, as to how and why Indian Moslems could no longer support the Government. But Mohammed Ali was a poor substitute for Mr Gandhi, whose moderating influence upon both communities was nowhere more seriously missed than in Hindu-Moslem relations. Things first took a sinister turn in the Punjab. Early in 1923 there was a riot at Multan, caused by some trifle in connection with a Moslem procession. One still worse took place—of all dates!—on the fourth anniversary of Jallianwalla Bagh at Amritsar itself: and the spectacle was witnessed of Hindus and Moslems killing each other, and of English soldiers called in to prevent them from doing so. The Akalis on that occasion came out in a new role too, as peacemakers between the two rival communities—and from this time on the Sikhs have come to assume an ever-growing importance in the political life of the Punjab, where they had been deemed so negligible less than a decade ago that no mention of them was made in the famous Lucknow Pact. One of the authors of that Pact, Mian Fazl-i-Husain, was now Minister in the Punjab (under the Reforms), and he was certainly implementing his Pact: by seeing to it that Moslems in the Punjab got their guaranteed 50 per cent. of all the loaves and fishes. Hindus and Sikhs thereupon waxed indignant at the "Moslem Raj": whilst the Moslems, seeing the nice Swaraj they were obtaining for themselves under the Reforms, saw less and less point in Non-Cooperation, and more and more in reversion to their traditional policy of siding with Government.

This estrangement was given a special edge to by the efforts of Swami Shraddhananda to bring the Malkana Rajputs of Agra District back into the Hindu fold. The following percentages will give an idea of the actual position at the time of the three communities in the Punjab:—

	Population	Voters	Seats in Legislative Council
Moslems	55	40	50
Hindus ..	34	30	32
Sikhs ..	11	30	18

Swami Shraddhananda and people of his way of thinking therefore planned that the best way of safeguarding and improving the Hindu position would be to increase the number of Hindu voters: and if these could be deducted from the Moslem side simultaneously, there would thus be a double gain in the turnover. This *Suddhi* movement of re-Hindusing castes that had fallen away into Islam was, of course, already a recognized activity of the Arya Samaj; but Swami Shraddhananda's intensive propaganda at a moment like the one in question would naturally exacerbate an already precarious position. It strengthened Moslem truculence and resolution to retaliate: and by reflex it imbued all Hinduism with a new note, which was the very opposite of *ahimsa*. The Hindu Mahasabha, which until then had been an organization for the defence of Hindu Orthodoxy, made at its seventh annual session in Benares (August 1923) advances to constitute progressive Hindu opinion by passing a resolution for admitting Untouchables to ordinary Hindu privileges: at the same time it thereby lessened the attraction Islam could hold out to these people; and thus even the most necessary reforms were pressed into fanning the flame of Hindu-Moslem enmity. Only two short years back Swami Shraddhananda had been preaching at the Jumaa Masjid of Delhi and Mr. Gandhi at a Bombay mosque to delirious Moslem multitudes about the beauty of Hindu-Moslem unity and the glory of the Khilafat: and now, where had all this vanished to?

As if this broth in the witches' cauldron was not sufficiently seasoned, the Government added a further ingredient to it by forcing the Maharaja of Nabha, a Sikh Prince of the Punjab,

to resign his throne. This interference was hotly resented by all Sikhs, since the Prince in question had not been conspicuously worse than the others, who nevertheless basked in the sunshine of British favour, but who had only been imprudent enough to display anti-British sentiments during the War and a pro-Akali attitude since. Thus another inducement was added to the Sikhs to side with Non-Cooperation.

Against this communal antagonism there must be set a current which strongly tended to unite all Indians in a common indignation against an Empire which differentiated against all of them, whether Hindus, Moslems or Sikhs, as "second-class citizens." This disability we have already referred to in the case of the Indians in South Africa, on whose behalf Mr. Gandhi had so persistently and gallantly fought. The case of Indians in South Africa, however, was always represented by English apologists as one affecting the liberty of every Dominion to regulate its domestic affairs without the shadow of any Imperial interference: and as this freedom is exactly what India herself aims at in her demand of Dominion status, it was impossible to deny the underlying principle. Thus England's *bona fides* and her own doctrine as to the equality of all citizens in the Empire remained unaffected by the Indian grievances in South Africa. This doctrine of equality of citizenship was indeed reaffirmed at the Imperial Conference of 1921¹ which the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri attended as India's representative: and as an outcome of it, Mr. Sastri was invited to make a tour of all the Dominions, except South Africa, in order to arrange for the implementing of this principle in the Dominions, without at the same time curtailing the unfettered right of every Dominion to regulate the composition of her population. On these lines a satisfactory arrangement was made both in Australia and in Canada: viz.: that for Indians actually in these

¹ For wording of Resolution see *Indians Abroad*, by S. A. Waiz, Bombay, 1927, p. 490.

Dominions there should be no discrimination in their citizenship rights, but that on the other hand India acquiesced in the practical exclusion of Indians from these Dominions.

Satisfactory as these arrangements were to the Dominions in question, there was one Crown Colony in Africa, Kenya, whose white population took violent exception to them. The Kenya Highlands had been appropriated by some English settlers under the leadership of Lord Delamere, reinforced by a large contingent of Boer emigrants from South Africa, who desired to turn Kenya into the close preserve of a White Oligarchy of agrarian magnates, who would lord it over a working population of black serfs. The presence of 22,822 Indians (as against 9,651 Europeans) was felt to queer the pitch of the whites and some of them went so far as to demand their compulsory repatriation. At all events their admission to the voters' register was declared by the European planters to be quite unacceptable and any instructions of the Colonial Office to the contrary, they threatened, would be met by an armed rebellion on the part of the Whites against the British Government.¹ An Adult Franchise Act for all Whites above 21 was rushed through the Kenya Legislature, to make it appear a *prima facie* impossibility of granting this franchise also to Indians: whilst of course a franchise once granted to the Whites could not very well be taken away from them again. Hence as a compromise the suggestion was made, to give Indians a separate electorate with more limited franchise. This communal electorate was indignantly refused by the Indians, as putting the stamp of second-class citizenship upon them, though it provided, of course, a fine debating point for the Whites who said that communal electorates were common in India and even insisted on there by the Indians themselves. The Indians of Kenya appealed to India: and in April 1923, Mr. Sastri, as head of an unofficial deputation

¹ For wording of Kenya Europeans' Resolution of February 26, 1923, see *Indians Abroad*, p. 51.

(consisting of two other Indian Liberals), sailed from India for London. The whole controversy can be summed up as to which of two theories of Empire was to prevail: was the British Empire to be a Commonwealth of free and equal Nations, or were the parts inhabited by pigmented races to be relegated to the status of *praedia* of the white races? Kenya was (and is still) the acid test of the British Empire and Mr. Sastri could well say therefore: "Kenya lost, all lost." The solemn pledges made previously by the Empire towards the Indians in Kenya made it moreover a question of honour for the Colonial Office to stand firm and not to give way to the truculence of the white settlers. The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies at the time was the Honourable Edward Wood (nowadays better known as Lord Irwin) who was at least as anxious as was Lord Winterton, to meet the just claims put forward by Mr. Sastri on behalf of India for a common electoral roll in Kenya for all people capable of passing a minimum test of civilization. But the Tory Government as a whole did not dare to stand up to and frankly dare Lord Delamere and his confederates to do their worst: they preferred so to whittle down the original Wood-Winterton agreement, as to make it agreeable to the Kenya Whites, and to leave it to India to put up with this fresh humiliation—which, literally, broke Mr. Sastri's heart.

He and his fellow-members of the Deputation had on their return to India in August 1923, a rousing welcome, in which all shades of political opinion joined, whether Liberals, Swarajists or Gandhists. Those whom Non-Cooperation had put asunder, Kenya was thus drawing—for the first time again—closer together. The question was, how retaliate? Mr. Sastri suggested that in the circumstances a self-respecting India could not take part in the Empire Exhibition planned for the year 1925: if it was to be a "White Empire," then let the Wembley Exhibition too remain All-White. Others in India wanted to go farther. Dr. Gour in the Legislative Assembly carried a Reci-

procity Bill, which provided for retaliation against all countries, which placed disabilities on Indians, and inflicted on their nationals in India exactly the same disabilities, which Indians had there to suffer. It is on this note and with the passing of this Bill that the first Legislature of the Reform era closed.

THE RISE OF THE SWARAJ PARTY—

Under the Montagu Reforms the life of the Legislative Assembly was limited to three years at a time: the first one, having been inaugurated in January 1921, therefore came automatically to a close with the autumn session of 1923. Elections followed: but this time Non-Cooperation was not going to allow the Indian Liberals to have a walk-over. In fact, Non-Cooperation itself was rapidly ceasing to be non-cooperative from the moment that the Mahatma had sounded his cease-fire after Chauri-Chaura. His incarceration no doubt had largely restored his popularity, but it had been incapable of restoring confidence in him as a political leader. C. R. Das in Bengal, Motilal Nehru in North India, Mr. N. C. Kelkar (Tilak's successor) in the Deccan, voiced aloud their discontent with the policy of Gandhian Non-Cooperation. Prominent lawyers, like Mr. M. R. Jayakar, resumed their practice. Everywhere the remnants of the Non-Cooperation policy were vanishing and the question therefore arose, why continue the boycott of the Councils? The Maharashtra leaders had always stood for "Responsive Co-operation" (i.e. cooperate where you can, and oppose where you must), which really was the same thing as the Indian Liberal Party's doctrine and practice; C. R. Das preached a gospel of entering the Councils in order to "end or mend them." He was President of the Congress at Gaya (Christmas, 1922) and moved the adoption of this plan by Congress in supersession of the pure and unalloyed Non-Cooperation policy.

But adherents of the latter won the day and thus the Gaya Congress declared for "No-Change": but C. R. Das thereupon resolved to organize a Swaraj Party, by the help of which he meant to capture the Congress, before the next elections for the Legislatures took place in the autumn of 1923.

The idea of entering the Councils exclusively with the idea of obstructing every measure, good, bad or indifferent, and thus bringing the whole machinery of the Montagu Reforms to a standstill, had first been mooted in 1918 by Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal, the hero of the Bengal Partition days, with a view of thus forcing England to grant a more liberal constitution. Rejected at the Amritsar Congress at Tilak's instance, Mr. Pal's idea had by 1922 been abandoned by its *quondam* sponsor himself, who had come to see its wrongness and futility—only to be taken up afresh by the new Das-Nehru party. Mr. Pal was so convinced of the impracticability of these purely obstructionist tactics—which were really only put forward in order to save the "face" of Non-Cooperation—that he refused to join the Swaraj Party and fought the 1923 elections as an "Independent." Mr. Joseph Baptista in Bombay similarly refused to pretend that he would "uniformly obstruct" the Councils, if returned to them; and gradually this "Responsive Cooperation" gained ground everywhere. In fact, had the Reforms been worked in a generous spirit of real goodwill, it is clear that the policy of the Indian Liberals—though neither in their name nor by their organization perhaps—would have come to hold the field. Unfortunately the Government resorted itself to such dictatorial and irresponsible methods that irresponsibility on the part of the Indian political parties became an almost unavoidable reflex action.

The crisis came with the doubling of the salt-tax which the new Finance Member, Sir Basil Blackett, had proposed in connection with his first budget, in February 1923. Now the salt-tax is traditionally unpopular in India—for one thing,

because it falls heaviest on the poorest people, acting as it does as a sort of poll-tax; for another, because it seems so contrary to nature to prohibit people living along the coast from gathering the salt which Providence seems to be throwing freely into their lap. The Legislature therefore objected to this item in the Finance Bill and suggested alternative ways of raising the money—for instance by raising the duty on cotton goods. Not only did Government remain obdurate, but when the Legislature had thrown out this item of the Bill, it was subsequently restored by the Viceroy “certifying” it. Thus the exceptional power, left in the hands of the Viceroy by the Montagu Reforms for grave emergencies, was lightly used as if it were an ordinary, normal exercise of constitutional functions. When the Indian States (Protection against Disaffection) Act had thus been “certified” the previous year, at least the Viceroy could say, that he was giving his casting vote for the Council of State against the Legislative Assembly: but on this occasion the Viceroy had no such excuse, as he was acting against the Legislature as a whole. As for an “Emergency,” this could by no stretch of imagination be said to have arisen: on the contrary it was a flagrant case of using autocratic powers with a flourish of “*sic volo, sic jubeo*” which sounded the death-knell to all pretence that the Montagu Reforms meant a substantial way towards Responsible Government. Lord Reading thus crushingly demonstrated, that nothing had been changed by the Government of India Act of 1919. Sir Montagu de P. Webb, himself an English member of the Legislative Assembly, could well say¹ that “it will be extremely difficult for me or any other self-respecting member of the Legislature to serve on an Assembly whose vote is liable to be autocratically overruled; not, be it noted, on a matter of great moment involving the safety or tranquillity of the State, but on a matter of ordinary routine budget business, wherein a difference of opinion may

¹ In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* of April 20, 1923.

arise as to the type of taxation most suitable at the moment, or to the degree of retrenchment practicable during the next twelve months." The *Economist* similarly said that Lord Reading was "playing with fire," and Sir V. Chirol in *The Times* cogently showed how the Viceroy had "once more shaken the faith of Indian Moderates who believed in the sincerity of British promises, but has given the Extremists the very handle, which they wanted, to denounce them as a lie."

This certification of the salt-tax is an important milestone in the political history of India: it proved to all and sundry that the Indian Legislature remained irresponsible and if the latter has subsequently given ample proof of its irresponsibility, let it be remembered that it was the Government of India which had shown the way and provoked them to it. Lord Reading was only proving what C. R. Das had been shouting from the housetops: that these sham Legislatures were only fit to be broken up by Swarajists entering them for the purpose of offering therein "uniform, continuous and constant obstruction." The words quoted form part of the resolution, which C. R. Das carried at a special meeting of Congress held in Delhi (September 1923), whereby Congress went back on its decision at Gaya, thus lifting its ban on Council entry. Thus the way had been cleared for the Swarajists to take part in the General Election of that autumn with the result that they were triumphantly returned at the top of the poll, the Liberals being fairly well wiped out. The rout of the latter reminds one of the fate of the Redmond Party in Ireland. The same flood-tide of Wilsonian idealism that promised to bring self-determination to Ireland, brought India her Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms; the same ebb, here as there, left behind a pusillanimous Government, afraid of the rashness of its own promises and bent on nothing so much as on taking back as far as it could in practice, what it had already conceded in theory. Redmond's followers, like the Indian Liberals, had been pre-

pared to place their faith in England's sincerity: a too often disappointed nation here as there refused their endorsement and to a man delegated its powers to Sinn Feiners and Swarajists instead.

In the meantime there had been some changes in the Government of England. In May 1923, Bonar Law resigned his post as Prime Minister and though Lord Curzon had obviously by his long service and high office the best claims to the succession, there was nobody in England, not even the *Morning Post*, that did not concede that for all his brilliance and merits Lord Curzon was impossible. Thus it was that Mr. Baldwin was asked to take up the Premiership: but as far as India was concerned, no change was discernible. But Mr. Baldwin later on in the year (in November) appealed to the country on a question of Free Trade—and the country went against him. All parties found themselves in a minority, but the Labour Party, being numerically the largest of the three, was called to take office, and Mr. MacDonald thus in January 1924 formed his first Cabinet.

The hopes of all Indians, certainly of all Indian Liberals ran high. The British Labour Party had been befriending the cause of India all along; it was they, who had since the War played the part, which in old Congress days Wedderburn, Bradlaugh, Dilke, Swift, McNeill, Stead and Hume had so conspicuously filled. Keir Hardie and Mr. MacDonald himself had advocated India's claims all along: and only a year back (in April 1923) Mrs. Besant's good offices with the Labour Party had led to their forming a Parliamentary Committee on India in London, with Colonel Wedgwood as Chairman.

Just at this very moment, on January 12, 1924, Mr. Gandhi, in prison at Poona, fell seriously ill, and had to be taken to the great General Hospital of the town to be operated upon for appendicitis.¹ The operation was successful: but the idea

¹ The historic Minute drawn up at the time by Mr. Sastri, whom Mr. Gandhi had called to his bedside before the operation took place, will be found in the *Servant of India* of January 17, 1924.

seemed monstrous, that after reconvalence Mr. Gandhi should be taken back to prison. The whole of India from one end to another echoed to the cry for setting free the Mahatma. The new Legislative Assembly met and was opened by Lord Reading in a speech full of menaces and exhortations, but containing not a single reference to Mr. Gandhi. Yet within a week, and on the morning itself of the day on which the Assembly was to debate a private motion for the release of Mr. Gandhi (February 5th), he was set free: Lord Reading thus deliberately avoiding either a graceful announcement in his opening speech or an equally graceful deference to the Assembly's wishes. Misguided enough to think that either would be construed as a sign of "weakness" and as bowing before the advent of the Swarajists in the Legislature, he did not see that by his policy he was only strengthening this party in their loudly voiced conviction that the MacDonald Government differed in nothing from the Tory Government it had superseded and that the Indian Legislatures under the Montagu Reforms were only meant as a sham. Within a few days (February 8th) the leader of the Swaraj Party in the Assembly, Pandit Motilal Nehru, moved, and the Legislative Assembly carried by an overwhelming majority, the following resolution: "This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council to take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full responsible government for India, and for the said purpose: (a) to summon at an early date representatives to a Round Table Conference to recommend, with due regard for the protection of the rights and interests of the important minorities, a constitution for India; and (b) after dissolving the Central Legislature, to place the said scheme before a newly elected Indian Legislature, and submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a statute."

Lord Reading's Government, of course, unceremoniously turned this "recommendation" down: with what statesman-

ship is best illustrated by the fiasco of the Government alternative, the Simon Commission, which after years of growing exasperation and turmoil has in the end, six years later, ended in exactly what the Indian leader then proposed—a Round Table Conference.

—and ITS DECLINE

The first Labour Cabinet certainly had a difficult task. Unable to effect anything without the other parties' concurrence, quite new to the offices assumed, faced in India by the solid opposition of the Government machine and its spokesman, Lord Reading: it deserves every allowance that can be made for it. Unfortunately, faced by the loudly proclaimed obstructionist policy of the Swarajists, Lord Olivier, the new Secretary of State, dared not make any move; and since he did not make any, the Swarajists were thrown back on a double dose of obstruction as the only way out. Thus the vicious circle was complete. Lord Olivier recognized the justice of the Indian position: in his first speech in the House of Lords (February 26th) he held four things responsible for the obstructionist policy of the Swarajists—the Dyer Resolution of the Lords, Mr. Lloyd George's "steel-frame" speech, the certification of the salt-tax and Kenya—and this analysis is as acute as his testimony is valuable. In fact Lord Olivier said in so many words that this "Government have the same ultimate aim as the Indian Swaraj Party" but he allowed himself, as so many British statesmen before him, to be frightened by the spectre of "disorder" and of another mutiny in India: and thus this Labour Party stalwart, when in office, actually agreed to the revival of the 1818 Bengal Regulation (which enabled people to be locked up without trial) because he had been told that without it revolutionary crime in Bengal could not be sup-

pressed—the murder in Calcutta of a police official having just given point to the Bureaucracy's demand. The Swaraj Party in the Assembly was as good as its word meantime, and threw out the 1924-25 Budget, lock, stock and barrel, thus forcing Government to resort to its power of "certification"—the latter maintaining that the issue clearly was "Autocracy or Anarchy," whilst the former lustily shouted "Diarchy or Swaraj."

The real struggle was between two ideologies: whether, as the Swarajists maintained, England and India were already two equals, in whose mutual interest it lay to come to a new *modus vivendi*; or whether, as Lord Reading's Government obstinately insisted, England alone was judge, whether and what further political changes were good for India. It was really about this fundamental principle that all the nationalist struggle in India since the War has raged and a precious decade was not only lost, but misspent, in accumulating bitterness and lawlessness. The British attitude was, of course, only made possible by the melancholy fact that India was not solid in its demands. Hindu-Moslem disunity indeed had grown monstrously and no month passed without some communal clashes over some punctilio of "cow-slaughter" by Moslems or "music before mosques" by Hindus. Mr. Gandhi, who had made only a slow convalescence after his operation, owing to the incessant demands made upon him by public affairs, recognized the parlous position into which India had drifted during his imprisonment¹ and formulated a scheme, whereby alone Indian solidarity could be achieved—to wit, (1) by universal hand-spinning, (2) Hindu-Moslem reconciliation, (3) removal of untouchability. On this platform he invited all Indians to

¹ Dr. M. A. Ansari and Lala Lajpat Rai had drawn up an "Indian National Pact" just about the time of Mr. Gandhi's liberation, but it had never met with any general acceptance. For its wording see *Servant of India* of February 7, 1924.

reunite in Congress: for Indian solidarity was not only rendered impossible by the differences existing between Hindus and Moslems, but also between Liberals and Congressists, and, inside Congress, between "No-Changers" and "Swarajists." In the meantime, he declared, all non-cooperation must remain suspended. In September 1924, he convened accordingly a Unity Conference to Delhi, consisting of all prominent Hindu and Moslem leaders, but including also some others, amongst whom the Anglican Metropolitan of India (Dr. Foss Westcott) and the Editor of the *Calcutta Statesman* (Mr. Arthur Moore) were the most prominent. Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to this Unity Conference consisted in a three weeks' fast, which ended on October 7, 1924: and this self-imposed penance with the prayers that were offered up at his bedside by Hindu, Moslem, Parsi and Christian alike, gave to it a spiritual tone and religious fervour, which augured well for its success. In fact, a formula was found after much searching of heart and anguish of mind, and, better still, a Hindu-Moslem Conciliation Board of fifteen was set up, which was to be called in, wherever and whenever any communal trouble was brewing. Alas, the admirable spirit of goodwill engendered evaporated in the event only too quickly, once the memorable days of Delhi were over, and the Conference proved incapable not only of healing the breach, but even of improving permanently relations between the two great communities.

The Moslem League had suffered a total eclipse by the Khilafat agitation. Even in 1923 still, when it had attempted a resumption of its activities, it had been silenced and voted down by the Khilafat extremists. But by December 1924, when the League held another session, the Khilafatists were in the minority and the League came back into its old position of a Moslem counterpart to the Congress. Just to smooth the way to a friendly understanding with the Khilafat organization, the League resolved to leave concern about Moslem interests outside India to the

Khilafatists; but with the abolition of the Khilafat by the Ghazi (March 1924), Khilafatism had, of course, lost all *raison d'être*.¹ The old Hindu-Moslem Unity engendered by Mr. Gandhi's Non-Cooperation disappeared simultaneously with the latter; and the *quondam* merging of Moslems in Indian nationalism was rapidly succeeded by the re-emergence of Moslem communalism, naked and unashamed. At the annual session of the Moslem League at Aligarh in December 1925, even Mahomed Ali forswore his Gandhian allegiance and with Sir Ali Imam, Mr. Jinnah and Sir Abdurrahim went back to the separatist attitude, which had regained all the popular favour—and even more—that it had ever commanded amongst Moslems. To no apparent purpose had Mahatma Gandhi fasted and done penance.

As regards a reunion of all parties inside Congress, the Liberals stood out from the first, as they lacked all faith in Mr. Gandhi's *Khaddar* gospel. Mrs. Besant however thought that her moment had once more come and that, if Paris was worth a Mass to Henry IV, Congress was well worth a *takli*² to herself. In February 1923, already Mrs. Besant had conceived the necessity of getting an Indian Demand formulated by all parties in India and presented to Parliament for ratification. At the time, she only got the Liberals to join her in elaborating a Draft Constitution, which was to represent the minimum demand of a united India. This draft she was anxious to get adopted by an All-Parties Conference held in Bombay in November 1924, and she even reappeared the month following on the Congress platform at the annual session held that year

¹ Four years later Islam itself ceased to be the State religion of Turkey, which thenceforth has become a "lay" State (in the French sense), of no interest nor further use to Moslem communalism in India.

² A sort of "waistcoat-pocket edition" of a spinning-wheel, which would just suffice for fulfilling a Congress Member's obligation of spinning daily.

at Belgaum under the presidency of Mr. Gandhi himself. His presidential address, however, was mainly devoted to an impassioned advocacy of the spinning-wheel and Mrs. Besant was never able to get back into the picture at all. Mrs. Besant did get some prominent Congress members' private signature to her Commonwealth of India Bill, it is true: but as one of the signatories, Mrs. Naidu, naïvely put it, "more because of her reverence of Mrs. Besant's great and accumulated record of service in the cause of India than on account of any agreement of views between them." In fact the Congress Committee refused point-blank leave for Congress to identify itself with this Bill, which even *ex hypothesi* was not expected to pass Parliament; though, of course, the Bill itself went even further than the proposals put forward by Motilal Nehru in the Legislative Assembly in February 1924, and repeated, in another form, in August 1925. Mrs. Besant had even tried to win C. R. Das's assent by agreeing to a postscript providing for a new campaign of passive resistance, in the event of this Commonwealth of India Bill being rejected by the British Parliament: all to no purpose, however. Finding nothing but latent antipathy and patent apathy for her plan in India, she promptly sailed in the middle of 1925 with her pet Bill for England and began there a whirlwind campaign for this Indian Demand, which necessarily fell flat, seeing that the only people in India who counted, the Congress, had refused to countenance it. Still Mrs. Besant doggedly persevered; she got the Labour Party to adopt it and to put it into the hands of the Parliamentary draftsmen; and she had the great satisfaction to find that the Bill, introduced by Mr. George Lansbury as a private bill, received its first reading in the House of Commons in December 1925.

In the meantime there had been a change of Government in England. Mr. MacDonald, having decided upon a dissolution of Parliament in October 1924, was heavily defeated at the polls, and had to make way for another Baldwin Government,

in which Lord Birkenhead was cast for the office of Secretary of State for India. Since the Swarajists under C. R. Das had proved so intransigent towards Lord Olivier, one would *a priori* have expected them to be still more intractable, when faced by a dominative personality like Lord Birkenhead's. The contrary, however, was true: and one is forced to conclude that C. R. Das, who could not think of cultivating people who were notoriously the friends of Indian Liberals, had not the slightest scruple to run after Lord Birkenhead at the very first opening, since, if successful, all the kudos would have accrued to him, the Deshabhandu, alone. In a famous speech of his, made at Faridpur, he thus responded to an exhortation of Lord Birkenhead's to disown the Terrorists: "Violence cuts at the root of that consolidation without which Swaraj is impossible. Violence is sure to be followed by more violence on the part of Government and repression may be so violent that its only effect on the Indian people would be to check their enthusiasm for Swaraj." Not enough with this, he added elsewhere in this speech that, "Independence is a lower ideal than Dominion Status in the great Commonwealth of Nations called the British Empire" and even went so far as to declare that "Independence may well be in certain circumstances a complete negation of Swaraj." What if a mere Moderate had dared to say such things! Das's own followers, it must be said, were petrified by this change of front, on his part: but all further developments were cut short by his sudden death, which took place only a month after his Faridpur speech, in June 1925. To a condolence meeting in England Lord Birkenhead and Lord Reading (who was on a short visit to England at the time) sent messages of sympathy.

The evolution of the Swaraj Party, it must be admitted, was far from edifying. Mr. Gandhi had realized how things were shaping, and at Belgaum had spun himself snugly into a cocoon of *Khadi*, leaving the Congress field to the politicians. The

latter were in the position of people who wanted to keep their cake and to eat it at the same time. They considered it necessary, in order to retain their popularity, to talk extremism, and yet were resolved to essay parliamentarism. As a consequence the Swarajists were driven to a course of quibbling, as to when cooperation was non-cooperation. One after another of the leaders took a course which was just that of a Liberal, yet all the time protesting that they were true to the principle of non-cooperation. In June 1925, Motilal Nehru accepted a seat on the Sken Commission, appointed to enquire into the possibility of more rapidly Indianizing the Army. Shortly after, Mr. També accepted the post of Executive Councillor in the Central Provinces, and Mr. Vithalbhai J. Patel allowed himself to be elected as first Indian "Speaker" of the Legislative Assembly. Lajpat Rai tamely entered the Legislative Assembly at the same time, after previous fierce opposition to such watering down of Non-Cooperation. The Maharashtra leaders, such as Messrs. Jayakar and Kelkar, wished to form their own frankly "Responsivist" Party, and yet at the same time wished to retain Congress membership. The spectacle was a sorry one: the only parties who really acted upon principle were the out and out Gandhians (the "No-Changers") on the one hand and the Indian Liberals on the other—both were suffering from unpopularity for the time being, the political scene being entirely occupied by the antics of the Swarajists, who, to preserve a semblance of intransigence, resorted to all kinds of stage effects: the Swarajist members in the Bombay Provincial Council for instance taking for a session a vow of mutism; and Motilal Nehru after (!) the Winter session, 1926, arranging for a "walk out" from the Legislative Assembly. The Congress at Belgaum (December 1924) under Mr. Gandhi's presidency and a year later (at Cawnpore), under that of Mrs. Naidu, laid it down that all parties were welcome to pursue their own methods within the Congress the Gandhists their

spinning, the Swarajists their politics: only they must agree to differ and not publicly fight one another. The Congress politicians thus were given all the rope they asked for and Mahatma Gandhi wisely was biding his time until the only possible result of so much rope would be—metaphorically speaking—for all the politicians to hang themselves, leaving himself as sole survivor and no alternative but his own method of Satyagraha.

STORM BREWING

In the face of the intrinsic insincerity of the Swarajists' attitude the Governments of Lords Birkenhead and Reading had no difficulty in keeping the upper hand. Lord Birkenhead told them¹ that if they "made an honest and sincere attempt to make the Constitution we gave them a success, no door is closed to them" and he gave a hint that he was quite prepared to let Indians have another Constitution of an entirely Indian flavour, provided it followed the undemocratic lines of for instance the fantastic scheme C. R. Das had sketched. But apart from these generalities, he thoroughly endorsed Lord Reading's panacea—viz.: that of stabilizing finance, encouraging industry and of letting people make money, but to leave politics on the simmer. Typical of this attitude was the abolition of the excise duty on cotton goods²: detested as a sign of India's fiscal bondage to England, the Legislative Assembly had again and again pressed for its abolition, especially as the cotton mills' industry of Bombay was getting into difficulties. The Government maintained their *non possumus* which was the only reply Lord

¹ In a speech made in the Lords on July 7, 1925.

² First imposed in 1894 on Indian mill-made cotton cloth. Since 1916 the import duty had been kept at a higher level, than the countervailing excise.

Reading ever gave to any proposal initiated by the Indian Legislature. Yet within three months, in December 1925, he "spontaneously" suspended the excise! The Montagu Reforms were thus subjected to a twofold spirit of irresponsibility, by the Government no less than by the Swarajists: both treating them contemptuously and as a mere make-believe. As a consequence of Lord Reading's attitude, the powers left under the Montagu Reforms in the hands of an irresponsible, irremovable and alien Government loomed so large, as to reduce all else to insignificance. Hence even the "transferred" subjects never seemed important enough to lead to the formation of Indian parties, vowed to different methods of applying them. The Liberals tried their best to utilize the "transferred" powers, but the heart of the nation was left cold thereby. How to wrest the "reserved" powers from the grip of the officials: that alone seemed to matter; and the only wrangle in the Indian camp was over the question, whether it should be done by indiscriminate obstruction, or by discriminate opposition.

An important event took place in April 1926, when the viceroyalty of Lord Reading ended and Lord Irwin made his entry upon the Indian scene. It happened to be on a Good Friday: and significantly enough Lord Irwin began his term of office by refusing any official functions on that first day of his on Indian soil and by going to Church instead—an example of religious piety, for the like of which one must go back to "the best beloved of Indian Viceroys," Lord Ripon. "That tall, thin, Christian" Mohammed Ali called him: and in doing so he only voiced the general note of admiration which Lord Irwin even *malgré eux* seemed to extort from everybody in India. Here was a man devoted to his religion, not an indifferentist; a man basing himself upon principles and no tricky opportunist. His lack of pomposity and aversion to mere astuteness endeared him at once to all Indians; his sympathy was genuine, his understanding true—the only question was:

would he also be strong enough to take his line against all bureaucratic opposition?

Lord Irwin had not been in the country more than three months before he made an offer to the two warring communities, Hindu and Moslem, to help them compose their differences and "realize their communal aspirations as integral parts of India": alas! the offer was not responded to. There had just been serious clashes in Calcutta in May and July, and generally things were really going from bad to worse in Hindu-Moslem relations—still, no Indian party could face the humiliation of having to call in the foreigner to make peace. Lord Irwin defined his attitude as twofold: preserve order and promote conciliation; but obviously, without the concurrence of the two parties concerned, he could not go far on the latter road.

The parties inside the Congress likewise continued at sixes and sevens: the Swarajist Party was more and more breaking up—but only to give place to sections which, though less intransigent as regards obstruction, developed an ugly Hindu communalism. Thus the Maharashtra Responsivists; thus a new party of Congress Independents under Pandit M. M. Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai, who rallied the Hindus of Northern India to their banner. Personal antagonisms largely entered into these scissions, and as everybody wanted to be leader and nobody mere follower, the parties multiplied. The second Assembly expired in the autumn of 1926 and at the ensuing elections the Swaraj Party as such came out less strong than at those held three years previously. In the Provinces the result was similar and the Central Provinces and Bengal, which for three years had lain fallow as far as Diarchy was concerned, returned sufficient members willing to work it, to make the system operative again.

1927 was to be an important year: but for reasons which had nothing to do with the violent communal clashes and

the arid political bickerings, to which Indian parties had been reduced. First of all there was the break by England of relations with Russia. This naturally led to retaliation by Russia at England's most vulnerable point, India: and though this result, of course, was not becoming manifest at once, it is only from 1927 onwards that Communist agitation in India has become a political factor.

Another event of far-reaching importance, but of a most pleasing nature, was the Capetown Pact concluded between the Union of South Africa and India regarding the position of Indians in South Africa. The Union Government had passed into the hands of General Hertzog, an extreme Boer Nationalist, who had advocated the segregation and repatriation of all Indians and who, as a staunch Republican, refused to let England come into this quarrel at all. But a delegation from India he received with pleasure and in the event he was only too proud to be able to show that South Africa could satisfactorily settle a problem with another member of the Empire, without the aid (or interference) of England. The Indian delegation consisted of the Rt. Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Mahomed Habibullah and Sir George Paddison—a very strong, because altogether harmonious, team, which under the leadership and with the statesmanship of Mr. Sastri, really achieved the seemingly impossible. The Areas Reservation Bill was altogether abandoned by the Union Government; “assisted emigration” was to be stimulated by a high bonus, but to remain entirely voluntary; and as for the Africa-born Indians who insisted on making South Africa their own country, the Government pledged itself to assist them in every way to attain the White standard of life in the Union.¹ Mr. Sastri

¹ The Pact ran originally for five years, but it was renewed—on substantially identical terms—in January 1932 at a Conference in Capetown, at which India was represented by Mr. Sastri and Mrs. Naidu. Cf. Mr. Sastri's article in *The Servant of India* of April 7, 1932.

captivated the Hertzog Cabinet, who in fact after the signing of the Pact insisted that Mr. Sastri must come back to South Africa as the first "Agent" of the Indian Government (a new office created by the Pact). Lord Irwin wholeheartedly backed Mr. Sastri throughout all these difficult negotiations, which he had all the less difficulty in doing, as he knew Mr. Sastri already for years—in fact since the Kenya days and the Wood-Winterton agreement. Important as all this was for India, there was another factor which affected in addition domestic Indian politics very closely: and that was the fact that before Mr. Sastri left for South Africa, throughout his negotiations there, and after his return to India, Mr. Sastri kept in close and constant contact with Mr. Gandhi, whom therefore he carried as much with him, as Lord Irwin and General Hertzog. As a result the Capetown Pact threw a first bridge again between Indian political parties and Mr. Sastri had the exceptional distinction, when in June 1927 he sailed as first Indian Agent (really ambassador) to South Africa, that he went at the joint request of Lord Irwin and Mahatma Gandhi.

There remain three other important events to chronicle in 1927, all of which were very far from reconciling Indian opinion to English "trusteeship." There was first of all the stabilizing of the rupee at 1s. 6d.—twopence higher than the traditional exchange ratio, which equated penny and anna. This measure helped Sir B. Blackett to balance his budgets, certainly, but at the cost of the Indian producer. Since a rupee fetched $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more sterling than formerly, a premium was put on imports from England; and since the sterling world rates for agricultural produce henceforth represented $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. less rupees than formerly, the Indian agriculturist producing raw material for the world market received so much less money for it. Hence the purchasing power of the Indian masses and the demand for Indian goods were simultaneously weakened, and there can be no doubt that the 1s. 6d. ratio has done much

to accentuate in India the economic world crisis of the past two years. Sir B. Blackett was able at the time to squeeze his Rupee Ratio Bill through the Legislatures, but they threw out his companion Bill for creating an Indian Reserve Bank, which really was part of his plan for a "managed" currency.

As regards the other two measures of Government, the Skeen Committee, to which I have already alluded, published its Report, which was unanimous, in April 1927: it provided a plan whereby one-half of the cadre of the Indian Army would be completely Indianized in twenty-five years. After the perpetual protestations of the Government, that military efficiency and Indianization of the Army were mutually exclusive terms, this Report of a Commission presided over and fully endorsed by none less than the Chief of Staff of the Indian Army itself came as a welcome relief and seemed at last to offer an opportunity of breaking through the official vicious circle that India could not be granted Swaraj until it could defend itself, and that it could not be trusted to defend itself, until it had proved itself capable of Swaraj. Twenty-five years is a long time, and half an army is not enough: still, the Skeen plan was accepted on all sides—except England's. Under the instructions of Lord Birkenhead, the Government of India refused to implement the plan produced by its own Chief of Staff, and under the most flimsy pretexts it procrastinated and refused to provide the necessary funds for carrying it out. The British Cabinet, of course, could not bring itself to give up the Indian Army in its aspect as an Imperial Force available for Imperial purposes: hence in this crucial matter England was once more seen to sacrifice India to her own interests. Nothing in fact has so clearly demonstrated to Indians England's *mala fides* regarding her alleged "trusteeship" and desire to prepare India for Dominion status, as this flagrant flouting of the Skeen Committee's Report, coming, as this did, after half a century of a

truly Machiavellian Army policy¹: and it can be safely affirmed that from this moment the conviction became universal in India, even amongst such sober and moderate sections as the Indian Liberals, that for the attainment of Swaraj all willing cooperation on the part of England must be definitely despaired of.

Into an atmosphere thus heavily charged was thrown as crowning event of the closing year (1927) the announcement of the Simon Committee's appointment.

SIMON COMMISSION AND NEHRU REPORT

The announcement of the appointment of a Statutory Commission under § 84A of the Government of India Act did not come as a surprise. For six months before the actual announcement the air was thick with rumours concerning it. A number of Indian leaders visited England during the summer of 1927, and, when they returned to India, every one of them was full of sinister foreboding. Never seemed English opinion to have hardened so much against India. The Swarajist tactics appeared to English opinion to be nothing but the sulks and tantrums of a spoilt child: and Lord Birkenhead of course felt himself cast for the role of the heavy father who would stand no nonsense. The Montagu Reform Act had provided for decennial reviews of the political situation in India, prompted no doubt

¹ For a masterly exposition of this see Chap. VI (on "Defence") of Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer's *Indian Constitutional Problems*, Bombay, 1928. As regards the feasibility of the Skeen Committee's plan, it has since become known that during Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's tenure of office as Executive Councillor the Army Staff had prepared a plan, whereby the *whole* Indian Army could be Indianized within thirty years; a plan which, needless to say, was set aside, as soon as Montagu was thrown to the wolves. Sir T. B. Sapru's own resignation followed soon after England's failure in this acid test of her *bona fides*. (See *The Week* of February 26th and *Servant of India* of June 4, 1931.)

thereto by a desire of reviving the searching surveys by Parliament of the East India Company's stewardship in the old "John Company" days. In the hands of Lord Birkenhead the clause assumed a very different aspect. To his and his party's way of thinking India had been given in the Montagu Reforms much more than it either deserved or could use: a Statutory Commission was needed, in order to say so authoritatively and to forestall any further "concessions." Very astutely this Commission was made to consist of members of all the three British parties, so as to commit all three to these findings: it was even once admitted, that the findings of the Commission must be unanimous and that *therefore* no Indians could be placed upon it. People like Sir T. B. Saprú had gauged pretty accurately what was the "final cause" of the Commission—to use an Aristotelian term—and it is important to note that it was men like he who led opposition to the Commission, the moment its composition was announced. That the Congress would oppose it, might have been taken for granted; and since they boycotted, on and off, most things under the sun for a while, it was only to be expected that they would boycott this Commission also. But it was the Indian Liberals who were the most vehement in their denunciation of this "All White" Commission, since it gave the *coup de grâce* to their cherished ideal of Indo-British collaboration. Lord Birkenhead no doubt thought that as the Indian Liberal leaders had no following they could be safely disregarded: this, however, only added an additional sting to the insult for the Indian Liberals and had therefore the result of once more uniting the Moderate and Extreme parties and thus supplying to the boycott the weight of principle and sobriety which it would otherwise have lacked.

Indian politicians had for years agitated for an acceleration of the date on which the Commission was to be appointed under the Government of India Act: under the impression that this was the only way of getting the unworkable system

of diarchy superseded by a true system of Swaraj. But latterly they had come to realize that under the existing Tory régime they had very little to hope for from such a Commission; and it was the Tory Government which now insisted on accelerating the date by putting the Government of India (Statutory Commission) Act, 1927, through Parliament. The Commission as finally appointed (by Royal Warrant of November 26, 1927), consisted of seven members: two Conservatives and two Labour members of the Commons; two Conservative members of the Lords and a Liberal commoner, Sir John Simon, as Chairman; and they paid two visits to India, from February 3 to March 31, 1928, and from October 11, 1928, to April 13, 1929.

The Leader of Allahabad, the most important Indian Liberal daily, on November 10, 1927, pronounced "this long-looked-for Statutory Commission, as it is constituted, to be both an injury and an insult to India. It is a calculated affront to Indian opinion—to Indian intelligence as well as to Indian self-respect. We declare our want of confidence in the Commission. It is our considered opinion that our countrymen should have nothing to do with it." At a great public meeting of December 11, 1927, at Allahabad, convened by Sir T. B. Saprú, the Resolution passed considered "the exclusion of Indians a deliberate insult to the people of India, as not only does it definitely assign to them a position of inferiority, but, what is worse, it denies them the right to participate in the determination of the constitution of their own country." The two quotations are typical of the opinion held in all responsible Indian quarters at the time. When the Simon Commission actually did arrive in India on its first visit, *hartals* and large demonstrations with black flags met it, wherever it went. Government thereupon organized counter-demonstrations, where it could, and police repression, where it could not. Liberals and Congress stood firm together in completely boycotting the Commission,

but gradually the Government succeeded in getting not only the few Loyalists, which any Government can command, but also most prominent Communalists to support the Simon Seven, by appearing before them, cooperating with them and generally cultivating them, as the people from whom communal boons might be had, whilst the Nationalists were absent observing their self-denying ordinance. An Indian Commission drawn from the Legislative Assembly was set up and similar Commissions in each Province, in order to "confer" with the Simon Commission; but there was an air of unreality over all these attempts at Indian cooperation and the boycott of the Commission by all Nationalists, from the most moderate to the most extreme, never wavered from start to bitter end.

In addition to this negative attitude the united Nationalist forces, under the impetus of the Liberals, resolved to prepare constructive proposals and frame themselves a draft Constitution proving that Indians could agree and what they would agree upon as a minimum National Demand. Lord Birkenhead in the Lords (in November 1927) when speaking on the appointment of the Statutory Commission, had acknowledged that Indians demanded "a Round Table Conference to decide upon the form of Constitution suitable for themselves, which then the British Parliament would formally pass," and he invited his critics, for the third time, "to put forward their own suggestions for a Constitution, to indicate to us the form, which in their judgment any reform of the Constitution should take." Lord Birkenhead thus spoke, convinced that Indians would never agree among themselves. But in the fervour of their boycott of the Simon Commission the Nationalists publicly announced that they would take Lord Birkenhead at his word: and the Congress (held at Madras, Christmas, 1927, under the presidency of Dr. M. A. Ansari) formally charged its Committee to convene an All-India All Parties Conference. This Conference met in February 1928, and

appointed a small Committee, of which Sir T. B. Saprú and Pandit Motilal Nehru were the most prominent and active members, commissioning them to draft a Constitution accordingly. The result of their labours is contained in the masterly and statesmanlike report, which has become historical under the name of Nehru Report.¹ As its name says, this document is in the first place a Report—which considers all the main constitutional problems in India with great acumen and political insight—and its Recommendations are not so much clauses of a draft Bill, as “an indication of the principles involved, which it will be for the Parliamentary draftsmen to put into shape.” Its authors conceive the constitutional position in India very much as that of Ireland, which “was taken and kept under the rule of England against her own will,” so that “the acquisition of Dominion Status by her became a matter of treaty between the two nations.” The Nehru Report is based on the assumption that India will remain within the Empire, just as the Irish Free State has done; the Constitution proposed follows closely that of England and of the Dominions. As regards the Indian States, they are left in their present relationship to the Government of India, though a future federal linking up of these States with the rest of India is looked forward to, whenever the States are ready for the surrender of rights which federation necessitates. The communal difficulty is solved by introducing adult suffrage, by reserved seats for Moslems, and by a redistribution of Provinces, so as to create four, in which Moslems would preponderate. The Nehru Report deserves to be read and studied in all its details, as it sheds light on every subject it touches and displays a practical common sense, which never loses itself in doctrinaire utopias,

¹ All Parties Conference, 1928: *Report of the Committee appointed by the Conference to Determine the Principles of the Constitution for India*. Published by the Indian National Congress, Allahabad, 1928, 168 pp. and 2 maps

but which equally spurns to shelter itself behind the enunciation of mere platitudes.

The Nehru Report was unanimously adopted by the All Parties Conference held end of August 1928, at Lucknow, including representatives of the All-India Liberal Federation, the Moslem League, the Hindu Mahasbha, the Central Khilafat Committee, the Central Sikh League, the All-India Conference of Indian Christians, the States' Peoples' Conference, as well as the Congress. But when it came to be ratified by the various bodies, many of them refused to budge from a standpoint of communal selfishness. The Moslem League was the crucial body and it got hopelessly divided. There was one section, headed by Sir M. Shafi, which stood for cooperation with the Simon Commission; there was another section which accepted the Nehru Report *in toto*; and a third, under Mr. Jinnah, which did so with very serious and objectionable amendments, such as that the residuary powers should be vested in the Provinces. A meeting of the Moslem League held at Delhi in March 1929, at which there was a great public clash of all these factions, revealed thus the fact, that the Moslems themselves were by no means united on the subject. But the opposition of the most communalistic sections was sufficient to hold up general ratification of the Nehru Report. Still, perhaps a compromise would yet have been found, if the Congress itself had been wholehearted in its acceptance of the Nehru Report. Unfortunately it was not—its objection being not that of the Moslem League, but of an Independence League, which had sprung into being in November 1928, in the bosom of the Congress itself, under the presidency of Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayengar, with Messrs. Subhas Chandra Bose and Jawahar Lal Nehru, as Secretaries.

DOMINION STATUS OR INDEPENDENCE?

This Independence question had really got into the official commitments of Congress by a side-wind. Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayengar, a former Solicitor-General of Madras, being devoured by the ambition of becoming a great All-India political leader, by great persistence succeeded in being elected to the presidency of the Indian National Congress in 1926 at the annual session at Gauhati. The fact remained, that Pandit Motilal Nehru completely outshone his "chief"—both by his intellectual powers and personal gifts as a leader of men: a fact which was as gall and wormwood to the Madras politician and constantly urged him to prove to the world that he was as good and popular a leader as any. It was really this inferiority-complex which prompted Mr. Ayengar—unwittingly no doubt—to go one better than everybody else at the Madras Congress of 1927 in his denunciation of the Simon Commission and to move a resolution "that the political goal of the Indian people was national independence," since the appointment of the Simon Commission had clearly proved that nothing further could be expected from the British connection. Being the most extreme utterance for the time being, it naturally would have seemed "unpatriotic" in an assembly of avowed Extremists to oppose it and so Mr. Ayengar's resolution was duly passed and all the glory of superpatriotism duly reflected upon him.

It can therefore be well imagined, what indignation swelled in Mr. Ayengar's breast, when the Nehru Report—to preserve a united front with the Liberals—had drawn up an Indian Constitution on a basis of British Dominion Status: for all the world, as if his, S. Srinivasa Ayengar's, Madras Resolution did not exist. Here was a golden opportunity to get the better of his rival, Pandit Motilal Nehru. Unfortunately this petty little personal vendetta, which at other times would have led to no serious consequences, fell into a time when Young India more and more considered "the old gang" as insufficiently up-to-

date and even the "extremism" of the Swaraj Party under Motilal Nehru as hopelessly old-fashioned and played-out. The Youth Movement which sprang up everywhere in India at the time had its eyes upon Moscow—it thought in apocalyptic terms of a new earth emerging out of a world cataclysm and it despised the "bourgeois" aims and methods of Congress, as much as Congress had spurned the "moderation" of the Indian Liberals. These people, of course, wanted a complete break in the British connection; they wanted Independence; they wanted it by any means—preferably by violence. And as irony would have it, amongst the outstanding leaders¹ of this new generation against the old was Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru, son of Pandit Motilal Nehru! Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru had been Secretary of Congress for some time—one of the most capable that Congress has had—but in September 1928 he tendered his resignation consequent upon his Committee's endorsement of his father's report and the Dominion Status implied therein. Now his father was cast for the presidency of Congress at the annual session of that year (Christmas 1928, at Calcutta) and had declared emphatically that India would be satisfied with Dominion Status, if honestly offered.

About the same time (October 1928) Lord Birkenhead retired from the Cabinet and from political life, and was succeeded at the India Office by Lord Peel, whose advent however made no material difference. The Simon Commission held the field, as far as England was concerned, and it was deemed sacrilegious, not to say bad manners, to utter any opinion about India, as long as the wisdom of the Simon Seven was maturing. And it was a connection with such an England that formed the crucial issue at the Calcutta Congress! The impatience of the young insurgents there was carrying all before it—

¹ Another was Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Chief Officer of Calcutta Municipality, who was interned under the Bengal Ordinance of 1818 in 1923, and only released more than three years later (under Lord Irwin!) when his health was seriously impaired.

and no wonder, really. The sober elements under Motilal Nehru seemed to fight a losing battle, when—like a *deus ex machina*—Mahatma Gandhi entered upon the scene and saved the situation by a temporizing resolution which, “while adhering to the resolution relating to complete independence passed at the Madras Congress, approved of the Constitution drawn up by the Nehru Committee”—but which added: “Subject to the exigencies of the political situation, this Congress will adopt the Constitution in its entirety, if it is accepted by the British Parliament on or before December 21, 1929; but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date, or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organize non-violent non-cooperation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner, as may be decided upon.” An amendment in favour of independence pure and simple was moved by Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and seconded by Mr. Jawarhar Lal Nehru, but defeated by 1,350 against 973 votes. There had been a landslide in favour of independence and only personal deference to the Mahatma ensured the passing of his resolution.

Two things are remarkable in this development: the re-emergence of Mr. Gandhi into political life, and his reverting to Satyagraha. Both he and his method had seemed to have gone to limbo: and here, all of a sudden, they were both back again, large as life! The non-payment of taxes had six months earlier once more assumed actuality—in the very place where six years before Non-Cooperation’s retreat had been sounded: at Bardoli in Surat District. A 20 per cent. increment in the land revenue assessment had been stoutly resisted by the peasants under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhai J. Patel by resort to Satyagraha, i.e. non-violent resistance on the part of the villagers to exaction of rent. Resignation of village officials and confiscation of property by Government had been further developments, and the whole outlook was for a regular civil war, albeit a “non-violent” one. Fortunately the Government, under Lord Irwin’s instructions, put all question of prestige

aside and consented to a "free and open" enquiry into the grievance—an enquiry which in the end proved the complete injustice and even illegality of the increment and equally the complete justification of the peasantry in resisting it. Thus not only had agrarian troubles forced themselves to the front, but Satyagraha had once more proved effective. With growing economic distress the question of a mass-rising of the peasantry seemed to have become suddenly an imminent possibility.

In the meantime Communist Workers' and Peasants' Associations had sprung up everywhere; strikes were rampant throughout 1928 in all industrial centres and the new strike leaders, in violent opposition to the existing trade unions, shouted not only "Down with Joshi," as a mere capitalists' tool, but also "Down with Motilal Nehru" and even "Down with Mahatma Gandhi," as useless "bourgeois." Their cry was "Capture the Congress!" and "Long Live the Revolution!" In December 1927¹ already the All-India Trade Union Congress held at Cawnpore witnessed, for the first time, the presence of a growing number of avowed Communists, who were gradually absorbing the Left Wing of that Congress. Their number was still small and they could not prevent the Indian trade unions from officially linking up with the British trade unions and the Amsterdam International, all of which was actually done at Cawnpore: but they acted as a compact party—a new phenomenon—and they defiantly walked out of the Congress, when defeated. In the year following in 1928 at Jharia, their number had grown considerably and there was wild talk of a General Strike. The whole Trade Union movement had become thoroughly unsettled, the old leaders had been rendered suspect and hopes for a red revolution as the only means of fulfilling all desires had been sown broadcast. The Government decided upon a rounding-up of all the Communist leaders in India (including three Englishmen) and in March 1929 charged

¹ See Ernest Kirk, "All-India Trade Unions at Cawnpore," in *The Week* of December 15, 1927.

31 of them with "conspiracy to deprive the King of the sovereignty of India," and lodged them in Meerut jail, where they were kept for nearly four years as under-trial prisoners: a judicial scandal which, even in India, one would have thought impossible under English law. They were tried by a specially appointed Sessions Judge in this small up-country town, where trial by jury does not obtain, and were removed there from Calcutta, Lahore, Poona, Lucknow, and Allahabad respectively. In addition to being denied trial by jury, they were refused bail; the trial itself lasted until August 1932, but the passing of sentence was further delayed until January 16, 1933. The prosecution endeavoured to prove (at an expense of sixteen lakhs of rupees!) that the accused had attempted with the assistance and financial support of the Communist Internationale to set up a political régime on the Russian model; and after four years (in the course of which one of the accused had died) three Indians were acquitted and the balance of 27 prisoners condemned to various terms, ranging from transportation for life to rigorous imprisonment for three years.

But this striking down of the tallest poppies of the Communist Movement had by no means scotched it. For, eight months after the arrest of the 31 leaders, when the Trade Union Congress met at Nagpur (November 1929) under the presidency of Mr. Jawahar Lal Nehru, the Communists were found to be in a large majority and, as a consequence, the affiliation effected at Cawnpore was rescinded and a resolution carried, aiming at Indian Independence and the establishment of a Socialist Republican Government after the Moscow pattern.¹ Shouts of "Remember your comrades in Meerut jail!" and "Long Live the Revolution!" rent the air and this time it was Mr. N. M. Joshi with a small remnant of non-Communist trade-unionists, who walked out of the hall.

¹ See R. R. Bakhale, "The Nagpur Split and After," in *Servant of India* of December 12, 1929.

Between the Meerut round-up and the Nagpur Trade-Union split, momentous things had happened in England. At the General Election in May Labour had come back to office, if not to full power, and in June 1929 Mr. MacDonald once more formed a Cabinet. In this last Mr. W. Wedgwood Benn took the India Office and with him the "dominative" policy there came to an end. Lord Irwin was called to London and remained in close consultation with the Cabinet and his own (Conservative) party friends from June till October. As a result Lord Irwin not only found himself in complete agreement with the Labour Cabinet, but also could prevail upon Mr. Baldwin and his party to let him declare the new policy decided upon as one agreed upon by all three British parties. Within a week of his return to India (October 31, 1929) Lord Irwin issued his famous statement, which seemed a direct response to the one year's respite which Congress had granted to a policy aiming at Dominion Status. Lord Irwin there announced that he was "authorized by H.M.'s Government to state clearly that, in their judgment, it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status." At the same time an exchange of letters between Sir John Simon and Mr. MacDonald was published to the effect that, after the publication of the Commission's Report, a Round Table Conference of British and Indian delegates would be convened to consider it and any other proposals whatsoever for the elaboration of a new Constitution for India. Inevitably there was a good deal of caution in the language used, and certainly the immediate raising of India to Dominion Status had not been effected: but that both Mr. Benn and Lord Irwin were approaching the Indian nation with a genuine desire of justice, an obvious honesty of purpose and a natural sense of equality was quite incontestable. Would it satisfy the Indian National Congress—Mr. Nehru, Junior, as well as Senior?

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICAL MOVEMENT, THIRD PERIOD (SINCE 1930)

THE REVOLUTION: HOW IT COMMENCED—

A MANIFESTO issued from Delhi as a reply to Lord Irwin's Pronouncement, and signed by such a galaxy of names as those of Mahatma Gandhi, Messrs. Nehru, father, as well as son, Pandit M. M. Malaviya, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Moonji, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, whilst of non-Congress members there figured the Rt. Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and Mrs. Besant: such a manifesto, I say, seemed to augur well. It "appreciated the sincerity underlying the declaration" and "tendered cooperation to H.M.'s Government in their effort to evolve a scheme of Dominion Constitution," but "understood" that the Round Table Conference proposed "not to discuss when Dominion Status is to be established, but to frame a scheme of Dominion Constitution for India." It also held it to be "absolutely essential that the public should be made to feel that a new era has commenced" and it therefore "considered it vital for the success of the proposed conference that there should be a general amnesty and that the Indian National Congress should have predominant representation on it."

It would be idle to deny that the generous pronouncement of the Benn-Irwin policy had produced a very generous response in India. Only intransigent doctrinaires like Mr. Srinivasa Ayengar and Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose held out for their pound of "Purna Swaraj" and Full Independence. Unfortunately their opposition was powerfully strengthened by the very discordant voices raised in England itself. Mr. Churchill

started a fortnight after the Irwin Pronouncement his campaign, which has become so notorious since, by describing Dominion Status for India as a "crime." Lord Birkenhead was almost equally vehement and Lord Reading frankly unsympathetic. It became evident that Lord Irwin had carried his old friend, Mr. Baldwin, indeed with him, but that the rest of the Conservative Party had not been won, while the Liberals seemed to declare themselves solidary in their resentment against the snub administered to their fellow-member, Sir John Simon, and his precious Commission, a snub implied in the very announcement of a Round Table Conference. In the face of this united opposition it was impossible for the Labour Government to proceed logically along the line chalked out by its Pronouncement, unless it was prepared to risk being put in a minority by a combined Conservative-Liberal censure vote: and to go to the country, in the bitterly anti-Indian atmosphere that still prevailed in England at the time, over such an issue as Swaraj for India, would indeed have been merely a form of *hara-kiri*, which was not likely to commend itself to Mr. MacDonald.

The Government therefore seemed to be temporizing over "Dominion Status Here and Now"—and this hesitation fanned afresh the flame of Indian resentment and impatience. "This year" (1929), had said Mr. Gandhi on his 60th birthday, "has been a year of Youth's awakening" and he therefore welcomed the election of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru as next year's President of the Indian National Congress. Indeed the unique event of a son succeeding father in the presidency of the Congress may be taken as symbolic of the new era which Lahore (where the Congress session, Christmas 1929, was to be held) in very truth was destined to usher in. Great efforts were made on both sides, as the fateful date approached, to prevent the declaration of war which everybody foresaw would follow the declaration of independence, whilst the terrorists made their

own contribution by bombing the Viceroy's train (fortunately unsuccessfully), as it bore him to a last conference with Mr. Gandhi and Pandit Motilal Nehru. But even these eleventh-hour peace negotiations came to nothing.

Mahatma Gandhi's intuition told him that the Labour Government was not strong enough to carry out its own policy, unless India was able to convince England that there was no alternative to it: and he equally recognized that nothing could stave off further the outbreak of the Revolution. The only thing that the Mahatma felt he could do was, to prevent it from becoming a butchery, by placing himself at the head of the Revolution and making it a "non-violent" one of Satyagraha. "Civil Disobedience alone," he frankly admitted a month later,¹ "can save the country from impending lawlessness and secret crime, since there is a party of violence in the country, which will not listen to speeches, resolutions or conferences, but believes only in direct action." Mr. Gandhi had the greatest difficulty in getting at Lahore a resolution passed, condemning the bombing of the Viceroy's train and congratulating Lord Irwin upon his escape: and it is clear that only he could have secured its passage, and even he only, because of the other resolutions which amounted to a "Declaration of Independence." The National Flag was ceremoniously hoisted and saluted, and then Congress closed its session on the very first day of the new year, the first of Indian Independence, 1931.

The Congress had decided naturally to give up the method of utilizing the Councils,² which had been resorted to by C. R. Das, his adherents and successors, when the Mahatma had called a halt in his Satyagraha campaign of nine years before. The Councils had been tried and the Swarajist tactics inside

¹ See *The Week*, VI, p. 288.

² All members of Congress who happened to be Members of the Legislative Assembly or the Provincial Councils accordingly boycotted these bodies and abstained henceforth from attending them.

them found utterly wanting: henceforth there was to be no further truck with them and Satyagraha was once more to be resorted to, as the only means of waging a "War of Independence"—the exact details to be decided upon by the Mahatma. "Independence Day" was to be everywhere observed on January 26th, as a day of discipline, restraint and religious purification: "Loose, irresponsible talk is not independence, but licence," had said Mr. Gandhi. With the exception of one single Hindu-Moslem clash (in Dacca) the day passed off throughout India in complete peace and orderliness, the Government allowing the processions to parade the streets unhindered. These processions were mainly made up of college students, school boys and young people generally—and women! The latter thus coming out of *purdah* into the political arena were a veritable portent of the fundamental change that was being wrought in the life of India. The Moslems, on the other hand, stood not only apart, but were opposed to the whole movement—at their head the Ali Brothers with their Khilafat organizations, who now allied themselves with Government against the Mahatma, and told Indian Moslems that it was quite wrong for them to engage upon the proposed Satyagraha: a remarkable change indeed in their attitude of a decade previously.

By the middle of February it had been given out that the Satyagraha campaign would begin by breaking the salt laws: and on March 2nd Mahatma Gandhi sent his famous "ultimatum" to Lord Irwin, beginning: "Dear Friend,—Before embarking on Civil Disobedience and taking the risk I have dreaded to take all these years, I would fain approach you and find a way out," and ending, "This letter is not in any way intended as a threat, but is a simple and sacred duty peremptory on a Civil Resister."¹ Lord Irwin, in reply, merely regretted "to hear that Mr. Gandhi intended to contravene the law":

¹ The letter is given *in extenso* by A. Fenner Brockway, *The Indian Crisis*, London, 1930, pp. 135 ff.

whereupon the latter on March 12th set out on a ceremonial pilgrimage from his Satyagrahashram at Ahmedabad to the sea-coast, accompanied by a chosen band of disciples and volunteers. Moving in short stages, he took over three weeks, to reach his goal, Dandi. There, on April 6, 1930, after purificatory bathing in the sea, the Mahatma picked up some naturally formed pieces of salt and appropriated it, thereby committing a deliberate, if technical, breach of the salt law. In this ceremonial manner was the "non-violent Revolution" begun: henceforth all Satyagrahis were exhorted to manufacture salt illegally, to trade in it illegally, in various ways to advertise themselves as civilly disobeying the law, and to offer themselves, non-violently, to the penalties of the law.

Illegal salt-making was started in Bombay, in Bengal, in the United and in the Central Provinces, in Madras. The Government began to send the leaders to jail; on April 16th, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru was sent to prison for six months and promptly he appointed his father to act for him as President of the Congress.¹ One after another the leaders disappeared behind the prison bars—but ever fresh ones were ready to take their place. Gujerat was covered with a network of "Swaraj Ashrams" and became the backbone of the fierce struggle. Where salt-making was not feasible, reading aloud proscribed literature in the market-place was often the method chosen for courting arrest: Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta, Mayor of Calcutta, thus went to prison. But what soon overwhelmed all these methods were two boycotts—that of foreign cloth and liquor shops. A Women's Army was formed in April, to specialize in these two boycotts—and it proved marvellously efficient.²

¹ When Motilal Nehru was arrested on June 30th, Sardar Patel succeeded him—and so the game went on.

² Miss Mary Campbell, who has for forty years been a temperance worker in India and received the Kaisar-i-Hind gold medal for it, thus describes (*Manchester Guardian* of June 22, 1931) this success, as far as it came under her own observation: "I was in Delhi when

The foreign cloth boycott of course proved a perfect boon to the Bombay mill-owners, who subsidized freely the Congress for this very purpose, and thus enabled it to enrol large numbers of volunteers—who were all the less difficult to find, as the world-crisis was steadily worsening and rendering also in India unemployment rife amongst all classes, not least amongst the intelligentsia. Mr. Gandhi had said that only those should undertake Satyagraha who believed in non-violence on principle and not merely as a matter of expediency. And the most marvellous spectacle of all this Revolution, which had infected the whole nation as with a raging fever, was surely that it was really to so large an extent a perfectly non-violent one. Not that there were no exceptions. The time was such, as to offer a fine chance to all turbulent spirits. An armed rising took place at Chittagong and guerilla warfare continued for months in the district. An invasion by Afridis of the N.W. Frontier was attempted on several occasions and on one of them they succeeded in getting as far as Peshawar.

On April 23rd there was a dreadful butchery at Peshawar, Mr. Gandhi, on his way back to jail, sent word. 'I leave the work of picketing the drink and drug shops to the women of India.' I thought he had made a mistake this time," said Miss Campbell, "and that the Delhi women, so many of whom live in *purdah*, could never undertake the task. But to my astonishment, out they came, and they picketed all the shops in Delhi, sixteen or seventeen in number. I watched them day after day. They stood there, saying nothing, but politely salaaming each customer who approached. The same thing happened repeatedly. The man would stop, saying, 'I beg your pardon, sister. I forgot myself in coming here,' and went away. That went on some days, until the licensees appealed to the Government. Then hefty policemen arrived with police vans and warned the women to go away. I thought those delicate sheltered women would give in now; they would never endure being touched by a policeman. But they did, and as fast as one relay was arrested, another took its place. Altogether about 1,600 women were imprisoned in Delhi alone. But they had done their work. Though the shops were opened no one went in, so at last the licensees themselves closed them, and so far as I can hear they are still closed to-day."

which deserves being described in some detail. Six Congress leaders of the town were to be arrested; and as soon as four of these men heard that warrants were out against them, they went to the police station to give themselves into custody. Later in the morning police officers with warrants for the arrest of two more arrived at the Congress office and took the two men with them in a motor lorry, the tyre of which punctured on the way. Instead of waiting there, it was agreed that the two leaders should voluntarily proceed to the police station. This they did, followed by a large but quite peaceful procession of sympathizers. Arrived at the police station, the gates were closed against them, as the officer in charge feared the crowd: and it took half an hour's parley for the two would-be prisoners to obtain admission to their prison! That done, the huge crowd outside the station began to wend their steps homewards, when suddenly two armoured cars full of soldiers came upon them without warning from behind and ran full-tilt into the crowd, killing three people on the spot and wounding many more. Thereupon the crowd seems to have set fire to the cars. An officer on a motor-cycle, who came upon the scene, brandishing his revolver, was killed. Thereupon a platoon of soldiers appeared and started firing into the crowd: but instead of running away, the Satyagrahis in the crowd came forward, baring their breasts and asking to be shot down. A young Sikh boy thus placed himself in front of a soldier and dared him to fire; he was promptly shot; an old woman, seeing her relatives fall, ran forward likewise and was killed. An old man, carrying a grandchild on his shoulders, fell down wounded. "The crowd stood their ground facing the soldiers from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and were fired at from time to time, until there were heaps of wounded and dying lying about," says a Congress Report.¹ Hundreds were thus killed, but, continues the Report, "the attitude of the people is evidenced by the fact that in

¹ Reproduced in *The Week* of May 15, 1930.

spite of British troops patrolling the city, picketing of the five liquor shops previously decided upon went on without a break the whole of the 23rd, batches of volunteers being sent out according to programme, as if nothing had happened. Though the gathering of more than five persons had been prohibited, the picketing went on on the 24th and this order was openly and peacefully defied. Three batches of volunteers were arrested on the 24th, but others came forward and the picketing continued. The authorities, finding their policy of arrest prove unavailing, released the volunteers and ordered the liquor shops to be closed for two months." I have described in greater detail this occurrence, as offering a good example of the situation which Government had henceforth to face. All awe of the physical and moral force of the authorities had disappeared: how were the people to be governed without their assent and against their will? Mr. Gandhi with all his salt "business" (to use a stage term) had at first seemed just silly. The affair had by this time taken on unlooked-for proportions. The Bureaucracy was largely nonplussed: the advocates of machine-gun frightfulness being kept in check by a Viceroy, who was pursuing the policy of an early Dominion Status for India. The result were the sort of cat and mouse tactics, which the Suffragette Movement in England had produced, a mixture of irresolution compounded of deference and brutality, of which the just described episode at Peshawar is also illustrative. Afterwards the technique was further modified by substituting *lathi*¹ charges by the police for firing by soldiers. And what was to be done with the Mahatma, the arch-rebel, himself? There also a compromise was struck: he was not to be left free; and yet he was not to be condemned as a criminal.

Under an altogether obsolete Bombay Ordinance of the year 1827 Mr. Gandhi was arrested on May 5th, 1930, and

¹ Heavy iron-shod bamboo poles which crack a skull with sickening ease.

interned in Poona jail during the Governor's pleasure, as being "a menace to public order."

—and HOW IT WAS SUSPENDED

Mahatma Gandhi's arrest—what wags call his "being taken with his pinch of salt"—had, of course, been long expected, and therefore prepared for. Mr. Abbas Tyabji at once stepped into Mr. Gandhi's place, as general directing the operations on the Western Front. He being put out of action by Government on May 12th, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu took over command, only to be arrested in her turn on May 21st. But successors never lacked: indeed this rise of an apparently unlimited supply of leaders was one of the most surprising phenomena of the Revolution. Each district soon had its "Dictator," appointed by the local Congress Committee, to superintend the Satyagrahis' warfare in that particular region: and the more dictators were arrested, the more there seemed to be available for arrest. The boycott of foreign cloth was intensified; picketers were jailed by the score and by the hundred. Altogether it is computed that 60,000 Satyagrahis were put to prison during the first year's war: a gigantic problem in itself, often solved by putting the prisoners behind barbed-wire entanglements. To add to the military aspect, the Congress provided a regular Ambulance Service and Field Hospitals to succour those wounded by the *lathi* blows of the police. The *modus operandi* was for the police for instance to issue an order that a procession must not enter a certain area, when naturally it endeavoured to do so, the police making a *lathi* charge on the crowd by way of reply. Sometimes for a whole day volunteers would come forward, offering themselves as targets for the *lathis*, and the struggle would only end by nightfall—the number of wounded running into three and even four figures. The heroism displayed by the Indian Satya-

grahis and the cruelty often practised by the Indian police could not fail to strike any beholder: it was really a clash between soul force and brute force. Of course, there were exceptions. On May 8th a riot started at Sholapur, which town was held by a frenzied mob for days, after the police in the place had either been massacred or put to flight. But such cases were exceptions. On the whole, the discipline and heroism of the Satyagrahis were beyond all praise.

Besides this form of repression, the Government resorted to the issue of emergency Ordinances. The first (issued on April 27th for six months) concerned the Press, which henceforth was at the mercy of the administrative fiat of any local official. All Congress papers ceased publication, with the result that rumours often of the wildest sort took the place of news. On May 30th two more Ordinances dealing with intimidation by picketing were issued: these naturally gave a great fillip to the two boycotts. When the Congress Committees were declared "unlawful assemblies," every other house in the central parts of Bombay came out with a board bearing the legend "Office of Congress Committee"! By October 10th, nine Ordinances had been gazetted, the ninth enabling Government to confiscate the property held by an "unlawful association": but the war continued with undiminished fierceness.

In the midst of this life and death struggle was published the Simon Report (signed May 27th and issued in two instalments). Notwithstanding a most intensive advertising campaign carried on in the British Press in its favour, the Report fell completely flat—as indeed was inevitable, seeing that the Report on its own showing dealt only with an India of the year 1927. Such trifles, as had happened in the intervening

¹ Much of this reads like the *blagues* which the inhabitants of Brussels were so fond of playing upon the German "Kommandantur" in the days of the Occupation.

three years, were, apparently, beneath the dignity of the Commission to take any notice of, and in consequence incapable of troubling the serenity of their platitudes. But even the India of 1927 seen and prescribed for by the Simon Seven was utterly out of focus and the Commission's analysis of the Indian problem betrayed a monstrous lack of understanding, only equalled by a similar lack of sympathy. The nostrum propounded—a larger amount of Swaraj in the Provinces, coupled with maintenance of autocracy at the centre—could hardly be taken seriously, except by ex-proconsuls and other retired bureaucrats, who still lived in the terms of a generation long dead and gone. As for India, even the Legislative Assembly—which at the time, July 12, 1930, contained no Congress members—had not a single good word to say for the Report and rejected it *in toto*. The British Government politely maintained that the Report would form a valuable basis from which discussion could start at the Round Table Conference they were about to convene: but notwithstanding this salve for Sir John Simon's *amour propre* it was clear from the moment of its publication, that this pretentious Report, which had cost the taxpayer a cool £150,000, was bound to disappear, still-born, in History's waste-paper basket.

Within a few weeks of his internment Mr. Gandhi had been interviewed in prison by a representative of the *Daily Herald* as to the terms on which he would be prepared to call off the Revolution and join a Round Table Conference. A couple of months later Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar obtained permission to see Mr. Gandhi and other leaders on a similar errand. During August 1930, various visits were paid by these peacemakers, both to Lord Irwin and to Mahatma Gandhi; and the two Nehrus, father and son, having been fetched by a special train from Naini Jail to Poona, there even took place at one time in Yerowda Jail, Poona, a conference between the two Moderates, Sir T. B. Sapru and Mr. Jayakar, on the one

hand, and Messrs. Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Jawahar Lal Nehru Patel and Mrs. Naidu on the other. (The last two were also prisoners in Poona.) It all came to nothing; but the terms were really not different in May from what they were in August—nor from what they eventually have proved to be the year after. Lord Irwin had called a Round Table Conference and was anxious that Mr. Gandhi and his Congress friends should attend it: why would he not do so and at least call a truce to the Revolution? Their reply was that even so the boycott of foreign cloth must be continued, that there must be a general amnesty and that the Round Table Conference must merely discuss the guarantees required for the transition period. These terms were in themselves not unacceptable—they were in principle accepted six months later: but they were put forward with an intransigence, which demanded that Government must simply capitulate, as the Congress leaders had no further use for mere promises. A fine gesture? Perhaps: unfortunately it let slip a golden opportunity, which, alas, was not to recur.

And so the struggle continued for six more weary months. Motilal Nehru's health had so much suffered by his imprisonment, that he was released from prison on September 8th. In spite of all the medical care given to him, it was found, however, impossible to restore his broken strength, and after lingering for another five months he died: having fulfilled his three score years and ten, almost within sight of that Swaraj, to the winning of which he had devoted the best and last part of his life. His son Jawaharlal came out of prison on October 11th, having served his sentence: at once he made a speech foreshadowing a stiffening of the fight, and a week later already he found himself once more in prison condemned to two years' hard labour. Sardar V. J. Patel, released from jail on November 5th on expiry of his sentence, assumed once more presidency of Congress: only to be put to jail again on January 6th. An agrarian "no tax" Satyagraha had meantime developed

strongly in Gujerat¹ and the United Provinces—the position, of agriculturists throughout India having become desperate owing to catastrophic fall in the world price of all raw materials and foodstuffs. In addition, however, to all genuine Satyagraha, acts of terrorism took place almost continuously and hardly a week passed without a bomb being thrown or a British official being murdered.

Meantime the Round Table Conference idea had been persevered in, notwithstanding all the Revolution in India, and henceforth general interest shifted from India to London. The Ceremonial Opening of the Conference took place on November 12, 1930, and the final session, at which the Conference was adjourned *sine die* (not closed!), on January 19, 1931. The 89 members taking part in it were divided into a British Delegation of 16 members; an Indian States Delegation of 16 members; and a British India Delegation of 57 members; the British Prime Minister, Mr. MacDonald, presiding. It is here neither possible nor necessary to go into the details of the proceedings²: but the two main results emerging must be adumbrated—the personal contact with the British Cabinet and Labour Party on the part of the Indian delegates convinced the latter of the former's genuine desire to let India have full Dominion Status at the earliest possible moment; and secondly, the Indian Princes and the Moslem Reactionaries successfully prepared such a position for themselves, as to be able to step into the place hitherto held by the British in India, as soon as the latter would vacate it. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that the Princes dominated the Conference,

¹ For details of this, of the police *zoolum* used to repress it, and of the doleful results, see Rev. Verrier Elwin's *Deserted Villages of Gujerat*, Poona, 1931. The facts related "clearly show the determination of the Indian masses to win freedom; they also illustrate, all too tragically, the repression which is an inevitable result of the domination of one nation by another."

² For these see the two Blue Books issued, Cmd. 3772 and 3778.

from the very first day, when, to the surprise of everybody, they came out with their desire to enter a Federated India forthwith. One week before the Conference started, both the Conservative and the Liberal Parties were fully determined to offer an uncompromising resistance to the demand for responsibility at the centre and to refuse to go beyond the proposals of the Simon Report. All that attitude had, with one stroke, become obsolete and impossible, when the first spokesman of the Princes, the Maharaja of Bikaner, had declared at the very first business meeting (on November 17, 1930) that the Princes were "on the side of progress and would not allow themselves to be arrayed against the realization of the just hopes of their fellow-countrymen in British India" and that they "realize that an All-India Federation is likely to prove the only satisfactory solution of India's problems."¹ All the reactionaries in England had hitherto been looking to the Princes to protect their *principatus dominativus*, just as in return theirs would be safeguarded by England: that the Princes now should turn towards an alliance with Indian Nationalism, proved conclusively, whither real power in India had shifted. The Princes' attitude came as a great shock to the British delegates and public and proved to them unmistakably, and for the first time really brought it home to them, that the time for British domination in India was past and that in very fact there was nothing left but to give Dominion Status within the Empire, while there was yet time.

The year 1930 had indeed witnessed a revolution—a literal one in India, but also one in the British attitude and in the status of India. Within a year of the Lahore Congress the equal status of Nationalist India as a party to any future Indo-British treaty had been acknowledged: and it was obvious that ably as some sections of the British India Delegation had represented Nationalist India at the Conference, they were not its accredited

¹ Pp. 36-37 of *Indian Round Table Conference* (Cmd. 3778).

plenipotentiaries in the sense that the Indian National Congress was. Now that really the substance of the National Demand had been conceded, would the Congress not renounce its attitude of non-cooperation and decide to participate in the Round Table Conference, when resumed?

On the same day that the Conference adjourned in London, Lord Irwin, addressing the Legislative Assembly in Delhi, pleaded for Mr. Gandhi's cooperation, if only in view of the terroristic developments in India: and within a week (on January 25, 1931) Mr. Gandhi was unconditionally set free, as well as all members of the Congress Executive, in order to "give an opportunity for them to consider the Premier's statement¹ at the Round Table Conference." On February 6th the Round Table Conference Delegates returned to India, and two days later Sir T. B. Saprú and Mr. Jayakar were negotiating with Mr. Gandhi at Allahabad. They were soon joined by the Rt. Hon. V. S. S. Sastri—the one man who equally shared the confidence of Mr. Gandhi and Lord Irwin, and who once more on this historic occasion proved the providential bridge between the two men. Mr. Sastri was able to convince Mr. Gandhi that the British really were in earnest this time and meant to leave it to India to shape its own destiny; but also that, unless he and Congress were prepared to step in, the Indian partisans of domineering, the Princes and the reactionary Moslems, would be able to dig themselves into a position, from which it would take a far greater and still more disastrous civil war to dislodge them. Besides, were the people able to hold out for another year of Satyagraha warfare? The reports were not reassuring, and so on February 14th Mr. Gandhi asked Lord

¹ Which closed with the prayer that "by our labours together India will come to possess the only thing she lacks to give her the status of a Dominion amongst the British Commonwealth of Nations—the responsibilities and the cares, the burdens and the difficulties, but the pride and the honour of responsible self-government."

Conference, and charged the Working Committee to appoint the delegates. Sardar Vallabhai Patel was elected President for the ensuing year and with commendable expedition managed to finish all the business before this momentous session within two days. His presidential speech was entirely devoted to the redress of the agrarian grievances and to the social, fiscal and economic reforms needed, in order to extricate the great masses of the people out of their depths of misery and abject poverty: and thus the new President officially sealed the new orientation of Congress, from the needs of the intelligentsia to those of the masses.

On his part, Lord Irwin in a last speech made by him at the Chelmsford Club in Delhi, before he relinquished the office of Viceroy,¹ reasserted that "no Englishman can, without being false to his own history and to his own pledges, take objection to pursuit by others of their own political liberty. Nor have I ever been able to appreciate the attitude of those who might be the first in Great Britain to exhort their countrymen only to buy British goods and yet regard *Swadeshi* as something disloyal. Trade will flourish when it reposes on a voluntary mutually beneficial basis, and the more successful Britain will be in finding a solution of the political side of the problem, the more will she be doing by the restoration of general friendly conditions for the benefit of British trade." And in one of the first speeches² he made on his return to England Lord Irwin added these wise words which seem so well to sum up the leading thoughts of the pages I have written: "Emerging from the history of the last century of our relations with India is the fact that modern India, politically, administratively,

¹ He sailed from Bombay on April 18, 1931, his successor in office being Lord Willingdon, who, at one time Governor of Bombay and later of Madras, had just completed his term of office as Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada.

² At Harrogate, on July 18, 1931.

intellectually, is largely the product of the British Connection, and that no greater disservice could be done to India than for that connection to be rudely or suddenly dissolved, and also the fact that the political thought of India is firmly, but quite naturally, determined to see India become responsible for the management of her own affairs. If Great Britain can realize that the India with which she deals to-day is not the India of yesterday any more than it will be the India of to-morrow, and if those who speak for India, be they British-Indian or representative of the Indian States, will realize, as Mr. Gandhi was willing to do in the agreement he made with me, that safeguards or adjustments for particular purposes or periods, are essential if India is to progress and prosper, I do not believe that wise men should find it beyond their power to reach agreement. But I would earnestly appeal both to Great Britain and India not to meet each other as those who are engaged in a grim struggle to retain or acquire power, in which the success of the one implies the failure of the other. The interests of both parties are far too closely engaged for such an analogy to be of the smallest value, except to the extremists in both camps, who, thinking in terms of war, are not likely to prove the best pioneers of peace. Let both approach it rather in the posture of confederates in a great and noble undertaking, concerned only to work together in the building of a house where East and West may meet, and which shall withstand all the winds and storms that from any quarter may beat it."

In listening to such words, one's mind travels involuntarily back to Lord Ripon and one remembers a speech made by him in Dublin on February 3, 1888, concerning, it is true, not India, but Ireland, a speech as applicable however to India to-day, as it was to the Ireland of his own generation. "The friendship of the two Peoples is the safety of both," Lord Ripon had declared and closing his speech he pleaded for

"a union, not merely written upon the barren pages of the Statute Book, but engraved on the living hearts of two free, generous and friendly Nations."

REAPING WAR

All the portents seemed to be pointing to that happy consummation of a century's efforts. In England Mr. Benn, as Secretary of State for India continued on the lines laid down by the Irwin-Gandhi Pact and endeavoured to convene without delay the adjourned Round Table Conference, so that its business might speedily be terminated by a Treaty and an Indian Constitution, approved of by all. But the stars in their courses seemed to fight against it. The one propitious moment having been missed six months earlier, nothing seemed to come right now. In August 1930 the Congress could have come in "on the ground floor," so to speak, of the Round Table Conference, and would certainly have been allotted half the total number of delegates from British India. At that time the Congress intransigents held out for better terms, with the result that the Round Table Conference began without them and that amongst the 57 members to represent British India (out of a grand total of 89) there was nobody to voice the great mass of Indian Nationalists, organized in the Indian National Congress. Six months later, when the Congress leaders allowed second thoughts to prevail, they found themselves at the great tactical disadvantage of having to meet a Round Table Conference, which had come into existence without them, and of having to build upon foundations laid by others. These foundations in fact were sectarian, not national: the "57 varieties" had, with very few exceptions, been selected mainly with a view to

¹ I quote from the *Proceedings of the Visit of Lord Ripon and Mr. Morley to Dublin* and published there in 1888.

that which distinguishes them from each other and certainly not on account of anything which they hold in common. That being so, it would be inevitable for the Congress Delegates at the Round Table Conference to seem but representatives of one more sectional interest, instead of the national *bonum commune*, which they really stand for. Mr. Gandhi no doubt realized the false position, in which Congress would find itself in London: to retrieve it, he made the further false move, of insisting on going to the Round Table Conference as sole delegate of Congress¹—not in order to take part in joint deliberations, but in order to deliver a “mandate” from Congress. Thus, from the outset, the collaboration of Mr. Gandhi in the work of the Round Table Conference seemed rather problematic. This impression was deepened by the logomachy, in which Mr. Gandhi indulged with the Indian Government on points of detail regarding the carrying out of the Pact in Gujarat, and which led in August to his point-blank refusal of attending the Conference: a climax, followed a fortnight later by the anti-climax of sailing after all. He arrived in London on September 12, 1931—and he was late in more senses than one for the Conference, which had been declared open on September 7th.

For in the meantime the position in England had changed catastrophically. The reckless budgeteering of Mr. Philip Snowden had seriously impaired the financial stability of the country in a world, rendered panicky by Germany's default, and since July there had set in such a “run on gold,” as to threaten the foundations on which the economic life of the realm seemed to be built up. One momentous event followed hard upon the heels of another: on August 11th, Messrs. MacDonald and Snowden met the bankers; on August 13th Mr. MacDonald consulted Mr. Baldwin; on August 22nd the

¹ This decision was, “after exhaustive discussion,” reached by the Congress Working Committee as early as April 2, 1931.

Cabinet resigned; and on August 26th Mr. MacDonald formed a new, "National," Government, to carry out a rigorous policy of retrenchment and thus "save the pound." The Labour Party went into opposition and Mr. MacDonald's National Government was therefore a Conservative Ministry, which included a few persons like himself, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Thomas and Lord Sankey, of whom all one could say was that they did not actually figure as members of the Conservative Party. Mr. MacDonald indeed remained Chairman of the Round Table Conference and Lord Sankey Chairman of the Federal Structure Committee, under which guise the Conference reopened: but—a difference with a vengeance!—at the India Office in the place of a *princeps civilis*, Mr. Wedgwood Benn, there was installed a *princeps dominativus*, Sir Samuel Hoare, a Conservative *sans phrases*.

Such was the situation facing the members of the Round Table Conference, upon reassembling in St. James's Palace. It was a very different England from that of the previous year, overshadowed from the start by the magnitude of the economic and political crisis, through which the country was passing, and which lasted practically all the time—three months—that the Conference was in session. Within a fortnight of its opening, Mr. MacDonald, who ostensibly had abandoned the principles and associates of a lifetime, in order to save the gold standard, startled the world afresh, by abandoning in turn the gold standard.¹ Another fortnight, and Mr. MacDonald, obedient to the Conservative cry for a tariff, abandoned Free Trade and dissolved Parliament. From October 7th to 27th the country found itself therefore in the turmoil of a raging, tearing, election campaign, which left the Round Table Conference in suspended animation. This campaign in fact was fought in circumstances of what can only be called a patriotic mass-hysteria, evoked by a "national

¹ The British Gold Standard Act of 1925 was suspended on September 21, 1931.

emergency" and recalling the "Khaki Election" of 1918. Its outcome was a House of Commons, in which 553 Ministerialists (of whom 470 were Conservatives) were faced by an Opposition of not more than 59 members, all told; and a reconstructed National Government, in which the only change even indirectly affecting India, consisted in substituting Sir John Simon for Lord Reading at the Foreign Office.

The new Government formally dates from November 9th and the Indian Round Table Conference lingered on for another month. Under Mr. Benn the Conference in 1930 had been a real joint deliberation of peers; under Sir Samuel Hoare in 1931 it was the tiresome legacy of a pompous debating society that was being liquidated. The spectacle the Conference presented to the English onlooker was indeed pitiful. On the one hand he saw the figure of a prophet, proclaiming lofty ideals which seemed either humanly unattainable or at least far removed from the immediately practicable—on the other, a crowd of cynic self-seekers, who, whether Princes or Communalists, clamoured each for his own order or community, his own vested interests, his own ascendancy over others, his own selfish and immediate gains. The onlooker forgot of course, that the selection of people on account of their differences from each other is indeed a good method for ventilating all possible points of view, but is the very worst method for reaching agreement; he also forgot, that the British Government refused to the last to give a lead or to commit itself to anything definite. Small blame to him, if he, an outsider, could not see that in the circumstances the Conference necessarily could be nothing else but a fiasco. Sir Samuel Hoare of course and his political friends knew it well: did they perhaps want it to be a fiasco, seeing that to the dominative mind the very idea of a Round Table Conference with subject-races is so much nonsense?

But it is only fair to add, that Mahatma Gandhi on his part

was not merely not helpful, but—not to put too fine a point on it—a distressing failure. Amongst those assembled¹ there were after all some men (and women) who placed the whole before the parts, and justice and freedom before loaves and fishes. There were included such distinguished names in India's historic struggle for Swaraj as Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Pandit M. M. Malaviya, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. N. M. Joshi and the powerful Editor of the *Hindu*,² Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar. There were Liberals like Sir Pheroze Sethna, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Mr. S. B. Tambe, Mr. M. B. Jayakar and Sir T. B. Sapru; Labour spokesmen like Mr. V. V. Giri and Mr. B. Shiva Rao; staunch democrats like Dr. S. K. Datta, the Indian Protestant leader. If Mr. Gandhi had placed himself at their head, had constructively collaborated with them, to vindicate the national and democratic needs of the new India that is struggling to be born: surely, a good deal more could have been achieved even under such dismal circumstances.³ Had he proved a real statesman, he could have risen above them; he could have shamed into silence the hucksters who were so gaily dividing the bear's skin; he could have given pause even to the alien rulers of India, whether it was feasible to keep this resurgent India in subjection. Alas, he not only was no leader nor statesman, but by what was on all sides felt⁴ as a sickening obsequiousness to

¹ The total number of members had been raised from 89 in 1930 to 107 in 1931. Of these 107, 65 formed the British India, 22 the Indian States, and 20 the British Delegation.

² A Madras daily, the most important Indian owned and managed paper in the whole of India.

³ "He might have been the leader of a united Nationalist Party; he preferred to be a mere Congress mandatory," wrote Mr. Sastri in the *Indian Review* (Madras) of January 1932.

⁴ The Mahatma's speech will be found *in extenso* in *Young India* of October 8, 1931. The frankest and most deadly commentary on it was offered in the *Servant of India* of September 24, 1931, under the title: "Selling the Pass," by Mr. S. G. Vazé, who of all the "Servants

the Princes, he actively helped the latter and the Moslem reactionaries into the place, which the British, if at all, only meant to relinquish, in order the more firmly, through such nominees of their own, to rivet their domination upon what was for ever to remain a Dependency.

Thus the Princes, who only rule over 20 per cent. of India's total population, secured the promise of a weightage, which would give them personally a 50 per cent. representation in any Central Legislature of the future, whilst the newly discovered friendship between such men as Lord Lloyd and Maulana Shaukat Ali¹ produced the Minorities' Pact² which would transform the caste Hindus—who constitute a 67 per cent. majority of the population of British India—into a 45 per cent. minority. It is perhaps unnecessary to go farther into the details of the incongruous and disconnected fragments of a Draft Constitution formulated at this wretched Conference, beyond stating that its only redeeming feature seems to be that it will never be possible to work it. The "long, slow agony" of the Round Table Conference (to use Mr. Gandhi's expression³)

of India" has perhaps modelled himself most faithfully upon his great *guru* Gokhalé. Placing Democracy before Nationalism, he is the protagonist of those who refuse to exchange the whips of the autocracy of their British rulers for the scorpions of that of the Indian Princes.

¹ Born 1873, he followed faithfully the lead and shared the life of his younger and more brilliant brother the Maulana Mohamed Ali. When the latter died, he took the Aga Khan for his chief: but of late, since the Unity Conference at Allahabad in October 1932, he seems to be coming back to a policy of Hindu-Moslem collaboration.

² For the details see *The Week* of November 19, 1931.

³ In a much discussed "interview" published by the *Giornale d'Italia* of December 13, 1931. Mr. Gandhi has denied the interview: from internal evidence it appears probable that Mme Tatiana Soukhotine, daughter of Tolstoy, has given the paper the gist of the many long conversations she had in Rome with the Mahatma. (Cf. *Young India* of January 14, 1932.) If so, both Mr. Gandhi is right in denying that he ever granted an interview to any Italian paper, and the *Giornale d'Italia* in maintaining the genuineness of the interview published by them.

came to an end on December 1, 1931; on December 6th the Mahatma left London and, visiting on the way M. Romain Rolland at Villeneuve and Signor Mussolini in Rome, landed in Bombay on December 28th.

On January 4, 1932, Mr. Gandhi was once more lodged, as a State prisoner, in Poona Jail.

STALEMATE

Mr. Gandhi had returned to India, more than ever full of misgivings about the real intentions of Great Britain and quite prepared if necessary to take up civil disobedience once more. But the real crux of the question was really, whether, though the Mahatma might be ready to resume *his* struggle, his followers were equally prepared to limit themselves to his "non-violent" method of conducting the struggle? His hold over them had once more become very precarious: his failure to obtain any results in London, anticipated though it was, only confirmed the great bulk of Congress followers in their opinion that a Gandhian Satyagraha was good enough as an overture, but that it was now high time to begin the bloody play of the Revolution itself. Terrorism certainly was rearing its head more defiantly than ever and had surpassed its own bloodstained record, when, on December 14, 1931, two high-school girls shot dead the District Magistrate of Comilla—the first Indian women to become political assassins.

In the circumstances it was hardly surprising that Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Willingdon had made up their minds, not to wait, until the struggle had proved itself either violent or non-violent, but were resolved to prevent any struggle at all from developing. The Congress had solemnly proclaimed the independence of India; it had defiantly boasted of carrying

on a war of liberation; it had explicitly refused to acknowledge the existence even of the British Raj in India: very well, then, they would take the Congress at its word and settle once for all, whether Government was master in India or Congress.

Accordingly Lord Willingdon refused to see Mr. Gandhi on his return from the Round Table Conference and sent him to Yeravda Gaol instead. A state of emergency was declared and government by ordinance substituted for government by law. All known leaders and prominent members of Congress were arrested and, if persisting in "civil disobedience," sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, to which in the case of wealthy men fines were added which often reached fantastic figures.¹ Every sort of activity whatever on the part of Congress was proscribed and its funds and sources of revenue tracked down and confiscated. The Ordinances gave unlimited powers to Government officers, and the police made unlimited use of them. They contained no check on Government, as to the persons they might regard as suspects; and to expose any misconduct of the Government under the Ordinances, became in itself an offence. The freedom of the Press was utterly taken away and it became illegal to publish any news whatsoever about Congress. The Police laid themselves out to break systematically, and often fiendishly, the spirit of the people on whom they were let loose; military police and troops were quartered, by way of collective punishment, on recalcitrant villages and rebellious districts. Whilst fancy punishments were freely resorted to by individuals, the odious transportation to the Andamans became once more officially a current form of punishment.

In the face of all this, "hartals" and public demonstrations continued for the greater part of 1932: even the annual session of Congress was held—after a fashion—in a public square

¹ Thus a fine of not less than Rs. 20,000 was inflicted upon Mr. Gualabchand; see *Servant of India* of April 14, 1932.

of Delhi on April 24, 1932, notwithstanding all the precautions taken by Government to prevent such flaunting of its authority. Mr. Sheth of Ahmedabad presided, the President-Elect, Pandit M. M. Malaviya, having been arrested on entering the city. Resolutions were passed approving the re-launching of the civil disobedience campaign and expressing satisfaction at the country's response to the call: and only when it was all over, was the Police able to supply an epilogue by arresting all the 700 participants.

But on the whole of course the Government was successful: successful, that is to say, not in the sense that the whole movement of revolt had collapsed, as official *communiqués* have so often proclaimed, nor in the sense that the spirit of the people had really been broken: but only in the sense that after a year's frightfulness the most provocative manifestations of that spirit had been rendered impossible and the movement itself driven wholly underground.

One feature remained unaltered throughout the year—the steadfast refusal on the part of India to buy British goods. The Ordinances had declared the boycott of British goods a crime; and the Courts were everywhere busy punishing it. Successful in this, they seemed hardly successful in stamping it out. The matter became soon further complicated by the brilliant idea which had struck a Congressman in Karachi, not to invite his fellow-countrymen to boycott British wares, but to exhort them instead to “Buy Indian!” If in Great Britain “Buy British!” could be the watchword and hallmark—duly stamped by Royalty—of every Patriot; if in Great Britain to poach a foreign egg or taste of non-Empire fruit could be looked upon as acts of base villainy; if in fact in Great Britain to “Buy British” had become the only correct thing to do: why and how could in India to “Buy Indian!” become a punishable offence? In the event and after some initial official hesitation, logic prevailed and organizations to spread the “Buy Indian!”

movement were allowed to proceed unchecked: and thus Swadeshism, which had so signally triumphed in Great Britain, was duly permitted to plead its cause in its native country.

But whether Indians said "Boycott British" or "Buy Indian," the result proved equally disastrous for Lancashire. Feeling ran highest in Bombay, which has ever been a Congress stronghold: and when in May Moslem Communalist leaders like Maulana Shaukat Ali took a hand at breaking the boycott, it did not take long to develop into one of the ugliest Hindu-Moslem riots that have stained Indian history. When the riot broke out (May 14, 1932), the authorities seemed to be taken unawares and for several days the city was practically in the hands of its hooligan elements, who killed and pillaged unchecked to their hearts' content. It took six weeks¹ for the excesses to stop: and the general opinion was that the authorities were not altogether sorry at the occurrence, which would "larn" Bombay to be pro-Congress.

If the turmoil in the country was unable to break the stillness that reigned behind prison-bars, the Mahatma for all that suddenly managed to get back into the picture outside. Ever since his imprisonment his mind had been haunted by the story according to which the one, who in later reincarnations

¹ The work of gradual pacification was largely due to intercommunal City Ward Committees, which toured the affected areas, bringing back a sense of security and common humanity to the terror-stricken inhabitants. In this truly Christian work the Indian Christian community of the city took a most prominent part as peace-makers between Moslems and Hindus—a role which they seem to be called to fill by the very fact of standing outside these Moslem-Hindu quarrels, and which gives this community a special national importance for the future. A brilliant young Catholic City Councillor, Prof. A. Soares, led one of these Ward Committees, and was later publicly thanked by the Mayor. He formerly used to edit *The Week*, the first All-India Catholic paper of national outlook, the appearance of which Ordinance Rule made impossible in February 1932. Mr. Soares is a splendid example of the share that Catholics can take in the rebirth of their motherland.

became the Buddha, had in one of his previous lives offered his own body as a meal to a starving tiger, and he increasingly became convinced that "for men with deep religious conviction there is no other outlet for the soul than this final sacrifice, when every other effort seems perfectly hopeless"¹—in other words, to non-cooperate with life itself. In a letter dated March 11, 1932, to Sir Samuel Hoare, he had already told "His Majesty's Government that in the event of their creating separate electorates for the depressed classes, I must fast to death"; but, failing this grievance, he apparently was ready to starve himself to death over some other point of contention. In the end the hunger-strike did fasten upon a provision affecting the vote to be given to the Depressed Classes under the new Constitution, and defined by a Communal Award published by the British Prime Minister in August 1932. This provision seemed to Mr. Gandhi to separate the Outcastes permanently and constitutionally from the Caste Hindus and he consequently informed Mr. MacDonald that he would resist it to death. The merits of the case can be gathered from Mr. MacDonald's reply that "as I understand your attitude, you propose to adopt the extreme course of starving yourself to death not in order to secure that the Depressed Classes should have joint electorates with other Hindus, because that is already provided for, nor to maintain the unity of Hinduism, which is also provided for, but solely to prevent the Depressed Classes—who, admittedly, suffer from terrible disabilities to-day—from being able to secure a limited number of representatives of their own choosing to speak on their behalf in Legislatures which will have a dominating influence over their future."

Such reasoning however Mr. Gandhi brushed aside as of one

¹ I quote Mr. Gandhi's own words from Mr. Pyarelal's book, *The Epic Fast* (Ahmedabad, 1923), p. 325.

"who on a matter of such vital and religious importance cannot come to a correct decision," and on September 20, 1932, he duly began his fast, as he had made up his mind to do.

But if this fast, when it began, was directed against Government, it very soon developed into one directed against that section of the Depressed Classes (led by Dr. Ambedkar) who had asked for the very provisions of Mr. MacDonald's communal award; whilst when it ended, it was found to have been really directed against those Caste Hindus, who had not been prepared to reduce their own voting power, in order to swell that of the Depressed Classes and thus enable Mr. Gandhi to buy off Dr. Ambedkar's opposition. As for Mr. MacDonald, he had at once declared that if Caste Hindus and Depressed Classes came to any agreement, he was quite ready to substitute their compromise for the corresponding provision in his own Communal Award: and when the "Pact" was actually achieved, he with most commendable speed cabled his formal acceptance of it on behalf of Government. Thus the Mahatma's life was saved: though only just; for when he broke his fast (September 26, 1932) the doctors had already pronounced him to be in serious danger of death. Hence the greater part of the negotiations between the party leaders who had gathered round the Mahatma's emaciated frame was carried on in an emotional atmosphere, not far removed from hysteria, which explains the surprising nature of the terms then pronounced acceptable. The Depressed Classes, in fact, to whom the Communal Award had granted 71 seats in the eight Provincial Councils concerned, had now by the Poona Pact no less than 148 seats reserved to them—a result all the more astonishing as only a year previously, at the Round Table Conference, the Mahatma had refused to move an inch to meet Dr. Ambedkar's claims, whilst now he was actually giving him far more than he was asking for. "In Poona," says an eyewitness,¹ "the

¹ See *Servant of India* of October 6, 1932.

disputants were no longer the Mahatma and Dr. Ambedkar, with the other Hindu leaders vainly persuading the former to meet the latter half-way, but the Mahatma and Dr. Ambedkar on one side, and the other Hindu leaders on the other side!"

The Poona Pact at the time and for weeks afterwards was hailed as the beginning of a new era in communal relations. If Hindus and Harijans¹ had been able peaceably to compose their differences, why not other Communities as well? An All-India Unity Conference under the presidency of Pandit Malaviya was accordingly convened to Allahabad and amongst the Moslem leaders the one who most eagerly responded to the call was—another miracle!—Maulana Shaukat Ali. The proceedings however met soon an irremovable obstacle in the European community of Bengal, who refused to sacrifice a single seat, to further Hindu-Moslem amity; other difficulties supervened and at the moment the Unity Conference stands, alas, "adjourned."

The greatest hopes, however, raised by the Poona Pact were in respect of the removal of Untouchability which seemed for once really on the way of being definitely cast out of the body politic of Hinduism. Some of the most famous temples—at Benares, at Puri—were throwing their doors open to the Harijans; an All-India Anti-Untouchability League and Harijan Seva Sangh was formed, to enable them to recover the ordinary civic and religious rights, for such long ages denied to them. Mr. Gandhi had all his life waged ceaseless war on Untouchability and had always declared its disappearance a *sine qua non* of Swaraj: now at last all his fondest hopes seemed to be coming true; and in Congress circles optimists were already predicting that the tremendous soul-force generated by achieving this most fundamental of all reforms would suffice to sweep even the British Raj into the sea.

¹ "Men of God." This is the new term adopted by Mr. Gandhi for the *quondam* "Untouchables." See Pyarelal, *loc cit.*, p. 305.

Alas, after a few months much of the revivalist ardour was found to have evaporated already and, as so often happens after the effects of intoxication—be it one of a material or a spiritual nature—have worn away, the outlook was found on “the morning after the night before” to have undergone a startling change. In this case the orthodox amongst the Caste Hindus went so far as to organize themselves in a determined opposition to the Harijans’ temple-entry and thus have enabled the British Government to assume once more the to them so congenial role of “keeping the ring,”¹ whilst Indians fight each other; on the other hand the Mahatma’s threat of renewing his fast has held a pistol at the head of Hindus longer than was perhaps prudent on his part. Exasperation at this dictatorship by emotion has become widespread and found vent for instance at a regular protest meeting, held at Poona on December 14, 1932, when Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, after observing that “the very notion of the Mahatma dying sends a thrill of horror into our hearts, coercing² us into silence and surrender,” traversed sharply his claim “that all he says, does and feels, is done in the presence of God. To crown all, he starts fasting to death in the name of

¹ See Lord Willingdon’s statement, dated January 23, 1933, explaining that, while he will not refuse leave to Mr. Ranga Iyer to introduce his Bill (to remove the Harijans’ religious disabilities) in the Legislative Assembly, “this does not in any way commit Government to acceptance or support of the principles of the Bill,” and forecasting that in any case the measure would not be allowed to proceed without receiving first widest circulation “for elucidating public opinion.”

² Mr. Gandhi of course denies that there is any trace of coercion in his threat to kill himself, and explains that “love compels; it does not coerce” (Pyarelal, *loc. cit.* p. 35). Can a subjectivist’s self-deception go so far as to make himself believe such verbal hair-splitting? It can indeed. “Faith in his honour and honesty is thoroughly well founded,” said a recent writer (in the *Manchester Guardian* of January 10, 1933) about another famous doctrinaire, Mr. de Valera. But one has to remember, he continued, that “Mr. de Valera is a mathematician whose universe has a sort of Einsteinian curve that makes him choose courses and arguments that seem crooked to the ordinary Euclidian mind.” And at that, I think, one may leave the matter.

God. The simple consequence," he concluded, "is the total suspension of judgment, the paralysis of reason and the emergence of absolute credulity in the affairs of the country."

Thus ended 1932: what of the future?

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

If one thing more than any other emerges from a contemplation of the sorry course of last year's events, it is surely this, that violent methods can effect no permanent cure. And this truth applies as much to the Mahatma's allegedly non-violent and non-coercive revolutions, as to the Viceroy's avowedly grim and efficient repression of them.

Past history should teach us future action: India certainly would do well to realize by this time that putting a pistol at Britannia's head is worse than futile—it not only does not advance India's cause, but actually retards it. The two disastrous Satyagraha campaigns of 1932 and 1921, the terrorist disturbances of the Curzon Period, the Mutiny of 1857, all go to prove it. Each time impatient spirits in India have tried shortcuts by violence, hardly won ground has been lost and has had to be recovered under more difficult conditions, after a galling interval of rank reaction. Constitutional advance towards Swaraj is sure, for by its sure, if slow, progress it gathers a momentum, which in the end becomes irresistible. But two qualities are required for its success: the self-discipline which knows to persevere and bide one's time; and the selfless service, which is content not to reap what one has sown.

On the other hand, England by this time ought to realize that repression only represses, but cannot remove grievances. Surely the notion, that if only you hit Indians hard enough over the head they are bound to love you and become good customers of yours, is the last word in silliness. All the violence

of 1932 has failed to eradicate Indian discontents: it has merely managed to increase a hundredfold the bitterness of resentment. It is possible to put a hundred thousand people behind prison-bars: it is quite impossible to keep them there permanently. One day repression must stop; and when it stops, things will be back where they were, but with difficulties vastly enhanced: for ultimately it is these very people that will govern their country.

Against this it may, of course, be contended, that when the repressive régime comes to an end, things will not be as they were, since in the meantime a new, federal Constitution will have been enacted, which will transfer the government of India to Indian hands; and that therefore by that time all grievances, except those of a handful of irresponsible and irreconcilable extremists, will have been met in full. Such facile optimism however is ill-founded and is bound to prove a complete deception. For what sort of self-government exactly is it proposed to grant, and in what Indian hands is it proposed to place the power of government? At the close of the Third Round Table Conference¹ Sir Samuel Hoare lucidly explained the broad lines of the plan, as it had emerged from all these consultations, and which he was now proposing to submit to Parliament. "Our threefold scheme," said the Secretary of State in a broadcast, "is first, that India must have a greater measure of self-govern-

¹ Held in London from November 15 to December 24, 1932. Originally Sir S. Hoare had announced (June 27, 1932) that he was dropping the Round Table Conference method: but in response to the Indian Liberals' violent protest, he consented to change, not the substance, but the form, of his decision. A Conference, greatly restricted in number and scope, was allowed to meet *in camera* and discuss points of detail, which could not touch the essence of the scheme, as decided upon a year previously. The total number of participants did not exceed forty, and the British Labour Party, significantly enough, refused to be represented at all, since they considered that "the National Government was not in accord with the policy set out in the White Paper" (issued after the First Round Table Conference).

ment; second, there must be no encroachment on the rights of the Indian Princes; third, the British partnership must be effectively safeguarded." On looking into the details of this "greater measure of self-government," one finds however that it does not only not touch questions of Defence and External Affairs (which remain the exclusive domain of a Viceroy responsible only to his master, the Secretary of State), but that even as regards Minorities, Internal Security and Finance, the Viceroy will be given special, overriding, in other words irresponsible, powers. What subjects, then, will the Federal Cabinet and Legislature be able to consider as falling entirely within their sphere of responsibility—what subjects are those that do not depend on Finance, or that cannot be linked with questions of Internal Security, External Affairs, Minorities or Army: what subjects therefore are exempt from and safeguarded against irresponsible government by certification?

To ask this question, is to answer it: so much then for the allegedly "greater measure of self-government" that is held out to India. But even apart from the extent, to which the powers of government are to be transferred, who exactly are the Indians whom it is proposed to entrust with such powers? The answer is clearly stated by Sir Samuel Hoare himself: those that will safeguard the interests of the British and of the Princes. But in that case the new Constitution will not and is not intended to serve the *bonum commune* of India, but only the private advantages of these two parties: and the powers of the former are in future only to be shared with the latter, that both may be gainers. It is with this end in view, that so much is made of the "safe" sections of the Indian population, who must be given due weight and assured a preponderating influence, if the actual rulers of India are to relinquish their trusteeship; it is this aim, which explains the tender regard shown for the susceptibilities of Princes, of the big landed proprietors, of

those Moslems who place special communal advantages safeguarded by England before the general interests of the nation as a whole.

As under the viceroyalty of Lord Reading the promise of "responsible" government was explained away as only meaning "responsive" government, so now under the viceroyalty of Lord Willingdon an attempt is being made to distinguish between "self"-government and "popular" government. In this attempt the adherents, both in England and in India, of the principle of dominative government are making common cause¹: and much as I for one am opposed to the attempt itself, I have nothing but praise for the method of collaboration between British and Indians. Only of course would I wish to see it matched by an equally, or even more close, collaboration between those in either country, whose political faith is democracy and who demand for India, not merely a government of Indians, but of the Indian people—those, who deem it more important to safeguard the luckless subjects of the Princes, than Their Highnesses' prerogatives; the rack-rented tenants rather, than their absentee landlords; the worker's share in industry, and not merely its exploitation by high finance.

It is the absence for so long of such systematic collaboration, as it still existed a quarter of a century ago, that seems to me the greatest error in the post-bellum relations between Britain and India: a fundamental and disastrous error, which must be corrected, if these relations are to become normal. Since the

¹ An amusing and instructive illustration of this collaboration of British and Indian *principes dominativi* is provided by the eagerness with which the Princes tried to minimize British paramountcy, as long as a Labour Government ruled England: they feared that British interference might force them to adopt some measure of popular government in their dominions—whilst now that there is a Conservative Government in England they would rather keep British paramountcy at its maximum, so that it may protect them against any democratic infiltration from British India. Cf. "A New View of Paramountcy," in the *Servant of India* of January 12, 1933

beginning of this century people in both countries have grown to think of that relationship in terms of war, of one nation, ranged in battle-array against the other. Again and again the British public and parties have been adjured to "present a united Front" on the Indian question and to sink all differences amongst themselves in the face of such a "national cause"—on the good old maxim of "My country, right or wrong." In an exactly parallel manner Indians, from Tilak and Aravinda Ghose to Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Subhaschandra Bose, have been brought up on a diet of unbridled Swadeshism.¹ In the last century the collaboration of English and Indian democrats was a living reality: to-day its revival seems to me an immediate necessity.

Just because nationalist frenzy is working itself out—in England, in India, in the whole world—in its last and insanest consequences, a general reawakening to the stark realities of the position cannot, one hopes, tarry much longer—a realization that national selfishness is no surer foundation for relations between States, than individual selfishness has proved for establishing order in the economic sphere; and that in this interdependent world of ours the ideal of national solidarity has become as idle and as mischievous a dream, as that of national sovereignty.

"Purna Swaraj," an India absolutely independent and therefore absolutely isolated, an ideal? Perish the thought—with my great political master Gokhalé I rather hold that India's linked destiny with Britain is ordained by Providence for India's good and that true Indian patriotism does not consist in handing India over to the Purna Swaraj of an Iraq or China, but rather demands the swift, but ordered, progress of the

¹ Incidentally I may perhaps here note that this narrow nationalist outlook has also precluded India from utilizing the great possibilities which membership in the League of Nations provides: systematic exposition of the Indian aspirations before world-opinion in Geneva has not been so much spurned as was similar work of information in England—but has really never even been seriously thought of.

Motherland from Self-Government to the National Sovereignty within the British Commonwealth of Nations, which the Westminster Statute of 1931 has secured already to those, who but a generation ago formed the British Colonies.

For after all, if one fact stands out more than any other from a historical consideration of the past hundred years, it surely is this, that the India, that has been reborn since, is British as well as Indian—British in the essentials governing its public life, its educational system, its legal concepts, its economic outlook, its literature, its whole mental orientation, though Indian in all the fibres of its heart and in the innermost depths of its ancient tradition and specific individuality—that the quintessence and very strength of this RENASCENT INDIA lies just in this fact, that it has indeed ancient Hindusthan for its mother, but modern England for its father.

Quis separabit?

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